

Michael F. Doran

**Atlas of County
Boundary Changes in
VIRGINIA
1634-1895**

Iberian Publishing Company

This book is printed in 10 point Prestige type in the descriptions for easy readability and 6 point Times Roman in the maps. It is printed in Vandijk Brown and Delft Blue inks on 24# Howard Antiqua Parch-Bond; the cover is Champion Coral Hopsack with a 24 point double thickness for durability. A 80% screening was used on maps and legends to present an antique appearance.

© 1987 by Iberian Publishing Company

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review to be printed in a magazine or newspaper.

ISBN 0-935931-30-9

Printed by the Iberian Publishing Company
548 Cedar Creek Drive
Athens, GA 30605

This book is for my son Matt, who likes maps.

Printed in the United States of America

Contents



PREFACE v

INTRODUCTION vii

THE EVOLUTION OF VIRGINIA'S FIRST-ORDER BOUNDARY 1

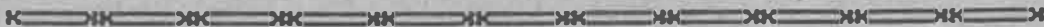
CRYSTALLIZING AND STABILIZING SECOND-ORDER BOUNDARIES 53

EXTINCT POLITIES OF VIRGINIA 57

OGIVE OF VIRGINIA COUNTY FORMATION 61

University of Virginia Press 1973

Illustrations



MAPS

	Page
Virginia Claims and Cessions, 1585-1866	5
Virginia Counties, 1634-1640	7
Virginia Counties, 1641-1650	9
Virginia Counties, 1651-1660 . . . . .	.11
Virginia Counties, 1661-1670 . . . . .	.13
Virginia Counties, 1691-1700 . . . . .	.15
Virginia Counties, 1701-1710 . . . . .	.17
Virginia Counties, 1721-1730 . . . . .	.19
Virginia Counties, 1731-1740 . . . . .	.21
Virginia Counties, 1741-1750 . . . . .	.23
Virginia Counties, 1751-1760 . . . . .	.25
Virginia Counties, 1761-1770 . . . . .	.27
Virginia Counties, 1771-1780 . . . . .	.29
Virginia Counties, 1781-1790 . . . . .	.31
Kentucky Counties, 1771-1780 . . . . .	.33
Kentucky Counties, 1781-1790 . . . . .	.35
Virginia Counties, 1791-1800 . . . . .	.37
Virginia Counties, 1801-1810 . . . . .	.39
Virginia Counties, 1811-1820 . . . . .	.41
Virginia Counties, 1821-1830 . . . . .	.43
Virginia Counties, 1831-1840 . . . . .	.45
Virginia Counties, 1841-1850 . . . . .	.47
Virginia Counties, 1851-1860 . . . . .	.49
Virginia Counties, 1865-1895 . . . . .	.51

TABLES

	Page
1. Phases in the Evolution of Virginia's First-Order Boundary	4
2. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1634-1640	6
3. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1641-1650	8
4. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1651-1660 . . . . .	.10
5. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1661-1670 . . . . .	.12
6. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1691-1700 . . . . .	.14
7. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1701-1710 . . . . .	.16
8. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1721-1730 . . . . .	.18
9. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1731-1740 . . . . .	.20
10. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1741-1750 . . . . .	.22
11. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1751-1760 . . . . .	.24
12. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1761-1770 . . . . .	.26
13. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1771-1780 . . . . .	.28
14. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1781-1790 . . . . .	.30
15. County Formation Activity in Kentucky, 1777-1792	32
16. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1791-1800 . . . . .	.36
17. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1801-1810 . . . . .	.38
18. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1811-1820 . . . . .	.40
19. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1821-1830 . . . . .	.42
20. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1831-1840 . . . . .	.44
21. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1841-1850 . . . . .	.46
22. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1851-1860 . . . . .	.48
23. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1861-1870 . . . . .	.50
24. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1871-1880 . . . . .	.50
25. Virginia County Formation Activity, 1891-1900 . . . . .	.50
26. Extinct Polities of Virginia . . . . .	.59

FIGURES

1. Crystallizing County Boundaries- 1680, 1710, 1740, 1770 . . . . .	.55
2. Crystallizing County Boundaries- 1800, 1830, 1860, 1890 . . . . .	.55
3. Virginia County Formation, 1634-1900 . . . . .	.61

P r e f a c e

This atlas is the most comprehensive image yet attempted which shows the evolution of county boundary changes in the Commonwealth of Virginia over its two and one half centuries of county formation and adjustment. Because it includes both the colonial and the post-colonial phases of boundary evolution, and deals with the oldest continuously-existing polity within the United States, the atlas considers the longest period of county formation of any American state. Since Virginia's position in the social history of post-Columbian North America has been considerable, the atlas of such an important political aspect as county locations is long overdue.

There have been a number of past efforts to provide the information noted here, but each has been limited by some characteristic. To my knowledge, the only comparable series of county boundary maps available for colonial Virginia are Morton's unscaled figures buried carelessly among an avalanche of other material in his two volume *Colonial Virginia*.¹ Unfortunately, the cartography in Morton is uniformly poor and citation of sources is totally absent, leaving the reader totally uninformed as to research methodology or relative level of accuracy. Robinson's early bibliography on county formation legislation in Virginia includes his depiction of county boundaries between 1634 and 1702,² but while fairly accurate this only whets the appetite -- the story of county boundary changes would last nearly two centuries more. None of the more recent attempts to identify and map county boundaries in the United States are satisfactory in the case of Virginia for a similar reason. Birdsall and Florin include Virginia in their work on county boundary changes in the American South, but do not trace the several states' histories back earlier than 1790.³ Even if future editions of Long's multi-volume work on boundaries include Virginia, presently not the case, again only data after 1790 is provided.⁴ This objection extends even to the most energetic and broadly-scoped work on county boundary research today, the maps of Thorndale and Dollarhide,⁵ although the future may see their state series able to include research into the colonial period of Virginia and other charter members of the United States.

Presumably the reason why colonial phases of county formation are being neglected is because no census data are available for pre-federal counties, and past workers have consequently seen little reason to go to the often considerable trouble involved in tracking down archaic boundaries.

My own interest in the nature of Virginia's county boundary changes originated during research on the expansion of the state's effective political territory, for which a detailed understanding of both state and county boundaries was necessary. I began the work naively imagining that enlargement of the effective territory would amount to simply mapping the location of new counties, as if they sprang into existence fully evolved and mature. This notion was quickly demolished: with only a rare exception, counties were created with characteristics which remained in place for a brief instant before they began experiencing often a long series of boundary alterations. As I struggled to piece together what had gone on, the task of historical cartography quickly assumed a scope enormously greater than anything I had imagined. Long after the original series of articles were completed, I and a series of assistants continued the effort of compiling the meandering story. The reason why we continued was because I had realized that there could well be others doing historical research who might be able to use what we were discovering; thus was born the idea of this atlas.

During the years while compilation, drafting, verifying, and writing went on I was aided by a long parade of undergraduate students at Radford University, where I was teaching at the time. Among these five stand out and require special mention. Henry Jackson, Billy Easton, and Paulette Dietz participated in the special seminar on the historical atlas and contributed greatly to an understanding of the project's scope. Carol Manion the produced a full tabulation showing the "genealogy" of Virginia's county origins and fissions, the results of which not only were invaluable to my work but provided the essence of an excellent paper she later presented to a national meeting of the Association of American Geographers. At last, as the final form of the atlas began to take shape, Jeff Perry set to work with a diligence more like that of a doctoral candidate than a twenty-year-old junior to make

scale reductions and do the initial light table ink work. My most sincere thanks go to each of these helpers for their cheerfulness, their enthusiasm, and their attention to detail in a labor which seemed likely never to end, but which has now been concluded with the present happy results.

1 Richard L. Morton, 1960:*Colonial Virginia*(2 vols.), Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press.

2 Morgan Poitiaux Robinson, 1916:"Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2, 3): 5-294.

3 Stephen S. Birdsall and John W. Florin, 1973: "A Series of County Outline Maps of the Southeast United States for the Period 1790-1860," Map Study No. 2, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Department of Geography.

4 John H. Long, 1984: *Historical Atlas and Chronology of County Boundaries, 1788-1980* (5 vols.), Boston: G.K. Hall.

5 William Thorndale and William Dollarhide, 1984: "Map Guide to the U. S. Federal Censuses, 1790-1920," American Genealogical Lending Library, Bountiful, Utah.



Introduction

We may consider all of human behavior as existing under the umbrella of political control in space. No one is free to do exactly what he wishes anywhere he wishes: there are always limitations imposed by other individuals either singly or in groups. Only a person entirely remote from all other human beings could claim total freedom. Now there is no place left on earth where escape from interaction is possible.

For some time in human history, perhaps extending from our proto-human phases, man ordinarily has lived in social groups within more-or-less recognized territories. As it became possible economically for increasing numbers of persons to be associated, organizational systems to manage their interactions were proliferated. One can crudely generalize a process of political accretion in which family bands became subsumed into clans, which in turn were united under chieftons, kingdoms, states, and empires. The most proliferated major political form today is the state. It retains within it for organizational efficiency a hierarchy of subsidiary polities whose powers are semi-autonomous and whose joint spatial extent is equivalent to the total area of the state. An individual is simultaneously under the sway of several political units at any given instant and interacts variously with each.

It is possible to devise a systematic which describes the arrangements of internal political power in a state in terms of orders. This idea apparently is attributable to Glassner and de Blij, who, in 1980 briefly discussed assigning an origin (or first-order point) at "the largest general purpose administrative or governmental units within the state."⁶ Although the concept itself is sound, because there is a heritage in political geography wherein the subdivisions of states are referred to as "politically organized areas of lower levels,"⁷ it seems more suitable to regard states themselves as being of the first-order. Their internal system of polities answering to the state would consequently lie at the second-order and further subdivisions of power would lie at increasingly lower orders. Likewise, groupings of states into federations or empires would form super-orders. It is this device which will be used here in discussion of the case of Virginia.

Virginia began its existence as a name vaguely applied to the coastal areas of North America by Sir Walter Raleigh in the 1580s. Resolution toward greater precision began when the London Company was able to establish the first lasting colony of Englishmen in North America along the James Estuary after 1607. The royal authorization of the colony by James I had specified a Virginia extending from latitudes 34°N. and 45°N. By 1620 this had been amended to enclose lands between 34°N. and 41°N., but with a pair of coastal origins which included a starting point for the northern boundary at just north of the Chesapeake Bay, presumably meaning that a 45° vector should be traced northwestward to 41°N. and thereafter westward.⁸ Eventually, Virginia became enclosed on both sides by other colonies, numbering a total of thirteen by the time of the American Revolution in 1775. For the purposes of the present discussion, Virginia may be considered a first-order polity from the first instance of territorial definition and governmental systemization, that is, by the 1610s.

Over most of the first two dozen years of the colony's existence very little attention was paid to formulation of internal government. This was because population levels were low enough so that the Governor could handle disputes personally, and because it took time for the image of Virginia to alter from that of a temporary, extractive factory to one of a lasting community. In the beginning, virtually no one lived outside the walls of Jamestown, but once gold hunting was replaced by the production of tobacco for export, groups of planters began moving somewhat afield and forming small clusters of houses as boroughs. In 1624, roughly contemporaneous with the demise of Company controls and their replacement by royal administration, the enlarging scope of Virginia had become clearly permanent enough to warrant establishment of a more extensive governmental system. An assembly of burgesses was created in that year, along with an incipient court system. With the passage of another decade it was decided to formally replicate the second-order political matrix then in use in England. This was the shire system, or county system as it soon would be called.

The English shire system now being transferred to Virginia was first organized after the unification of England and Wales by the Normans in the 1200s. Sections of the realm were defined into "shires," the principal officer of which was

the "shire-reeve" (sheriff) who both administered and maintained law and order for the king. Other lesser officers of the shire were a bailiff in charge of records, a coroner who investigated the cause of all deaths, and a surveyor who supervised all land transfers. Eventually a lord-lieutenant, unsalaried and usually a member of the aristocracy, was authorized to organize a militia for defense of the shire as needed. By the 1300s courts of justices of the peace and quarterly assizes assumed the tribunal responsibilities of the sheriff, who became increasingly an agent through which rulings were carried out. This system had been functioning successfully for three hundred years by the time it was adopted in Virginia.⁹

In 1634, when the first shires received their duties, there was a rather remarkable level of ignorance about both local geography and the margins of Virginia itself. We find therefore that most of the shires' territorial definitions were comparably vague to that of Virginia, which may have had latitudinal parameters of satisfactory clarity but whose westward limits were "sea to sea." Virginia gradually was trimmed and diminished: by 1763, with the conclusion of the French and Indian War, her westward boundary was reduced to the Mississippi River; in 1783 she ceded all claims to lands north of the Ohio River to United States control; in 1789 the Kentucky country was given up so that the State of Kentucky could be created in 1792; and in 1863 several dozen counties broke away in order to remain with the federal union and out of the control of an Old Dominion regarded as disinterested in their affairs. As the process of first-order territorial adjustment proceeded, Virginia was being filled by a second-order system based on the initial shires but by the 1640s known as the county network. Most of these counties experienced an analogous process of size diminution to that of Virginia itself.

New counties were created as population moved outward into previously unoccupied country, and after distance from old county seats began to produce difficulties in the transaction of their business.¹⁰ Ordinarily there would be petitions to the General Assembly for redress of the problem, followed as deemed appropriate by redefinition of the second-order political arrangements so that the area in which the petitioners lived could have access to a new county seat placed as nearly as possible in their

midst. Except at the beginning, when counties were formed from completely unorganized lands, new polities were carved from territory formerly within the titular control of previously established counties. Increasingly, donorship came to be multiple, especially once the Appalachian Plateau began to be settled. In some cases as many as four old counties gave up sections to create a new polity.

Over the first decades of county formation, establishment of the new units in the second-order system tended to be close to older regions where county boundaries were becoming stabilized. By the end of the eighteenth century, settlements were leapfrogging out into the wilderness as pioneers sought out the better locations and bypassed mountainous or infertile country. The first major nucleation disjunct from the old front of county formation was in the Bluegrass country of Kentucky, where several counties approaching a size wherein most residents could easily access the county seat had been created by the 1780s. The sense of community, and of distance from the effective first-order supervision of Williamsburg, had become strong enough after the American Revolution so that all these counties were allowed to generate their own first-order government with the establishment of the State of Kentucky in 1792. Other county stabilization afield from the ranks of sequential formations was underway on the Appalachian Plateau within a short time, and may have offered an early suggestion of the eventual departure of counties here to form West Virginia in 1863.

Over the full period of polity system evolution, the clear majority of cases involved a single donor yielding up land to create a single new county. A few alternative cases developed in the early eighteenth century, but they were maverick situations according to the general tenor of the times. However, after the conclusion of the American Revolution this began to change, and by early nineteenth century multiple donorship had become the norm during county creation. It will be noted that the rate of county formation overall can be interpreted in a growth curve analogy, i.e., a low initial slope followed by a rapid takeoff and concluding in a second low slope ending in stabilization of the system.

The following figures and tables present the details of Virginia's centuries of county formation and adjustment. Perusal of old maps in the C. Harrison Mann Collection at George Mason University showed that county boundaries were largely unmarked prior to 1790, and even through the War Between the States regularly were drawn with important discrepancies because of poor surveys available to contemporary cartographers. It was thus necessary to consult the legislation involved in each county creation and alteration, a prodigious task made just possible through the invaluable guide to Virginia legislation compiled by Robinson early in this century (see footnote 2). But complete accuracy was not possible when drafting began because of a welter of contradictory definitions and references to landmarks whose names have been changed over the years. The process of compilation became a matter of working back into the past decade by decade, seeking to identify what went on as best one could. In spite of the flaws which must consequently mar the accuracy of the figures, as much has been done to reduce error as was possible.

6 Glassner, M. I. and Harm, J. de Blij, 1980. *Systematic Political Geography* (3rd. ed.) New York, Chichester, Brisbane, Toronto: John Wiley, p. 215.

7 Hartshorne, Richard. 1950. "The Functional Approach in Political Geography," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 40: 101.

8 Sams, Conway Whittle, 1929: *The Conquest of Virginia. The Second Attempt*. Norfolk: Keyser-Doherty, pp. 751-766; Sams, 1939: *The Conquest of Virginia. The Third Attempt. 1610-1624*. New York: G.P. Putnam, pp. 756-773.

9 Fairlie, John A. and Charles Maynard Kneier, 1930: *County Government and Administration*. New York: Century, pp. 3-13.

10 Hiden, Martha W. 1957. *How Justice Grew. Virginia Counties, an Abstract of Their Formation*. Williamsburg: 350th Anniversary Celebration Corp. *passim*.



The Evolution of Virginia's First-Order Boundary

Ablation of distant regions where a forming state's influence is ephemeral may occur repeatedly prior to effective controls being instituted over the final state incarnation. The first-order political profile of Virginia was redefined a number of times during its first two and a half centuries of existence. As no significant changes have occurred since 1866, it is probably safe to assume that Virginia's present spatial configuration is securely in place and that only an intrastate conflict could produce boundary destabilization, an eventuality one may presume to be unlikely in a modern federation. Virginia's stable situation was arrived at in the course of critical events whose chronology may be grouped into phases of political development.

Virginia today is a federated state, existing as one element of the United States of America. It originated as a distinct colonial offshoot within the First British Empire and is thus a "secondary state" in Fried's terms.¹ The formative phase of Virginia involved extirpation of relatively weak tribal groups originally claiming title to the lands where she became established; later encounters with more substantial political units, specifically the Five Civilized Tribes, resulted in their removal to presumed worthless lands west of the Mississippi River. No trace remains of these aboriginal polities except an occasional name. The history of Virginia's first-order boundary evolution demonstrates how arbitrarily arranged can be the spatial dimensions of a state at its conception, and how refinements of definition tend to involve manipulation of the political periphery far from earliest areas of settlement.

FORMATIVE PHASE

The formative phase of Virginia lasted roughly one-third of a century. She began her existence as little more than a name associated with part of the eastern seaboard of North America. In the 1580s, a number of English nobles and businessmen led by Sir Walter Raleigh lobbied Queen Elizabeth for military and diplomatic support of foreign colonial activity. The Queen responded in 1584 by granting Raleigh charters to develop plantations in Ireland and in some other location outside the territories of any Christian king. These rights were to extend in a 200-league (approximately 600 mile) radius from wherever a settlement might be set

out. Raleigh's choice was the embayed coastline of what is now North Carolina. A colony was made on Roanoke Island at the juncture of Albemarle sound and Pamlico Sound just south of 36°N. It only survived from 1585 to 1587 but was important for two reasons. It served as a headquarters for coastal exploration north into the appealing reaches of Chesapeake Bay, and contributed to the making of a regional name for the new English claims in North America. Either as an anglicized modification of a local chieftain's name (Win-gi-na) or in unabashed flattery of the distaff English sovereign, Raleigh's lands became known as Virginia.²

Failure of the Roanoke experiment coincided with the beginnings of warfare with Spain, one issue of which was the Vatican's endorsement of exclusive Spanish rights to exploit North America and the Caribbean. Only after Spanish naval power was eclipsed following her four armada debacles in Europe (1588 through 1598) did English commercial interests again rise with regard to a North American colony. Investors from several coastal English cities approached James I for support, and in 1606 he issued a First Charter for the colonization of Virginia. The area addressed was defined as the coastline of North America between 34°N. and 45°N. A First Colony would be placed in the southern parts of Virginia by a company of London merchants; a Second Colony backed jointly by merchants of Plymouth, Bristol, and Exeter would be permitted to settle to the north of 38°N.³

Both companies quickly assembled the means to support their enterprises, landing colonists in the James Estuary of Chesapeake Bay and at the mouth of the Kenebec River in modern Maine. The latter pioneer vanguard was totally unsuccessful and quickly abandoned; that of the London Company, while surviving, was barely able to remain in place. To further encourage colonial efforts, in 1609 James I issued a Second Charter granting the London Company exclusive rights to operate in a Virginia now defined as lying "sea to sea, west and northwest" of two locations on the North American coastline, each two hundred miles away from Point Comfort at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. Virginia's southern boundary therefore lay at approximately 34°N. from Atlantic to Pacific. Her northern boundary may be conceived as extending northwest from near today's coastal juncture of

Pennsylvania and Delaware until it reached 45°N., after which it turned westward to the Pacific Ocean.⁴

A further charter of the London Company, made in 1612, briefly augmented the Second Charter's definition of Virginia by incorporating into it all islands offshore between 30°N. and 41°N. This revision was intended as a means of incorporating the recently-rediscovered Bermuda Islands within a functioning incorporating administration as initial settlement there began. By 1615 the islands had been separated from Virginia, leaving only a conceptual residue wherein Virginia's northern limits might be thought of in terms of 41°N. In 1620 this was confirmed, when New England was chartered with a southern margin formulated at 41°N. Virginia's maximum putative extent, reached with the Second Charter and amended by the Third Charter, was thus in the same order of magnitude as the dimensions of all Europe. This was well before the actual size of North America was even dimly understood, and the distance "from sea to sea" was imagined to be a matter of just a few hundred miles at most. Once the truth began to be learned, Virginia's first-order periphery was repeatedly trimmed in an effort to create a set of colonial administrations whose joint activity might better make a reasonable attempt at monitoring and governing the vast new continent.⁵

EARLY ADJUSTMENT PHASE

The barest outlines of Virginia as a political entity were hardly in place before she entered her first period of first-order boundary adjustment. The planting of settlement along the James faltered at first under the stresses of inadequate management and a terrific death rate from disease; still, by the 1620s profits from the export of tobacco were beginning to yield satisfactory returns to investment. The heightened perceived value of Virginia made the Crown quite attentive to its situation. In response to the disastrous rising and massacre of pioneers carried out by Opechancanough in 1622, and the new threat posed by Dutch pioneering in the Hudson Valley, in 1624 the London Company's charter was revoked and direct royal administration was set up in its place. No immediate boundary changes resulted, but it was clear that with this turn of events a royal estimation of strategic needs must

Evolution of Virginia's First-Order Boundary (contd.)

inevitably dictate a reduction in Virginia's vastness past the first step already noted of creating New England north of 41°N.

By 1629 it had been decided that Virginia must be redefined to allow the insertion of other colonial administrations in its hinterland. In that year, the rights to all lands lying between 31°N. and 36°N. were granted to Sir Robert Heath. This action reduced Virginia's southern extent by approximately two degrees of latitude, perhaps with the intention of divorcing the entire coastal province of barrier islands and estuaries south of Virginia from her controls for development by several other authorities.⁶ Although Heath never acted meaningfully to begin exploitation of his grant, a second area formulated to the north of Virginia quickly became a burgeoning colony in its own right. In 1632, Lord Baltimore was granted all rights to a tract lying essentially between 40°N. and the Potomac River, in spite of the fact that the upper Chesapeake Bay vicinity had already been visited by Virginians and tentative camps made in a few places. Maryland, as Baltimore's colony became settled, was quickly a successful exporter of tobacco products and an ally against piracy and invasion by whichever non-English parties might intrude into the area. Because of this, the Potomac River boundary became a significant measure of the different administrations in Virginia and Maryland, and was soon embedded firmly in the political consciousness of both colonies. It became the first lasting first-order boundary among England's North American claims.

Final fixing of Virginia's southern boundary was delayed for a generation because of political upheavals in the British Isles. The absolutist behavior of Charles I after his accession in 1625 led to the outbreak of the English Civil War in the 1640s and the Puritan Commonwealth in the 1650s, during which time affairs at home preoccupied the attention of most Englishmen. The Dutch availed themselves of this opportunity to enlarge upon their position intermediate between the English colonies in New England and around Chesapeake Bay, pushing southward from the Hudson Valley along the latter-day Jersey coastline and annexing several Swedish outposts in Delaware Bay. With the Stuart Restoration in 1660, the issue of protecting New World English claims again came to the forefront of interest in Great Britain. This

was manifested in 1663 when Charles II rewarded eight supporters, most notably the Duke of Albemarle, by granting them exploitation rights in the old Heath grant, now named Carolina. Between 1664 and 1667 a war was carried on with the Netherlands, during which all the Dutch North American settlements were annexed. As the Dutch presence was being excised, the Albemarle consortium petitioned for an adjustment of their claims in Carolina. A number of Virginians had straggled across the Dismal Swamp and were squatting along the north shore of Albemarle Sound. So that this population could form the nucleus of Carolina's new development, it was asked that the Virginia/Carolina boundary be moved so as to encompass them in Carolina. The request was granted by Charles II in 1665, with the boundary set at 36°30'N. This line between Virginia and Carolina, subject to minor vagaries when surveying was carried out, would become the second lasting first-order boundary in the English colonies.⁸

The next period during which Virginia's extent was redefined came about as a result of international disputes in the eighteenth century over the exact dimensions of English, French, and English claims in North America. Ownership of the interior, including much of Virginia's western claims, was distantly disputed by Spain and more directly by France. Henry IV of France had made his own arbitrary New World decisions at the turn of the seventeenth century when Spain's naval might began to decline. He formulated a New France as lying between 40°N. and 46°N. In 1604 and 1608 French outposts were placed at Port Royal and Quebec. Gradually, as the English came to dominate the major portion of North America's eastern coast, France developed a second colonial nexus north along the shores of the St. Lawrence estuary and river.

While New France lagged considerably behind the English colonies in size of population, her explorers were vigorous enough to reach the mouth of the Mississippi River from the interior while the English were still tentatively examining the Virginia Piedmont. France in 1682 claimed the entire drainage of the Mississippi in defiance of English claims running sea to sea. This was of no immediate significance because neither France nor England had the barest potential of actually doing anything about their conflicting New World

domains. But when France in the 1750s finally began to construct a series of wilderness fortresses west of the Appalachian Mountains so as to begin a more active role in developing the trans-Appalachian West, a general European war was touched off. At the conclusion of this Seven Years War (to the English colonists, the French and Indian War), the French stood defeated and were required to suffer the penalties usually levied against the losing sides of those times. In the Peace of Paris in 1763 she forfeited all her North American mainland claims, with England receiving Quebec and Spain (as England's tenuous ally) becoming undisputed master of all North America west of the Mississippi River. This international agreement marked an end to all definitions of Virginia holding provisions of definition west of the Mississippi. Although she still claimed territories north of the Ohio River, the Mississippi was now Virginia's western limit.⁹

This major adjustment was soon followed by others. The westward surge of settlement into the trans-Allegheny territory of Virginia was temporarily slowed by Parliament's Proclamation of 1763 designating all English possessions west of the Appalachian crest as reserved exclusively for Indian preserves. The immediate and vociferous uproar that arose from Virginia and the other colonies with western claims caused England to hastily negotiate the opening of some lands to pioneering. Further objections by the tribes immediately in the path of frontier expansion were quieted in the mid-1770s, when the Shawnee were crushed militarily and relinquished their hold to lands south of the Ohio River, and the Cherokee signed away control of lands north of the Tennessee River. Although Virginia sought to retain political rights to most of this new district according to her old charters, Parliament via the Quebec Act of 1774 erased all colonial claims north of the Ohio so that this territory could be administered within an enlarged definition of Quebec. This decision contributed to the outbreak of the War for American Independence in 1776, for Virginia and the other English colonies were strongly against the loss of such a large area without being given the right to voice at least an opinion on the subject. As the rebellion followed its course, despite their reluctance to give up territory the colonies with

western lands had demonstrated in repeated instances that they were unable to govern effectively past the mountain barriers. After hostilities with Great Britain were concluded by the early 1780s, Virginia and the others began to divest themselves of lands they could not control. In 1784, Virginia gave up all claims to the cis-Ohioan country, to be administered by the federal government until division into new states could be accomplished. After receipt of a series of petitions from pioneers in the Kentucky country, in 1789 Virginia permitted the several counties in this area to separate themselves to prepare for independent statehood, which occurred in 1792.

STABILIZATION PHASE

The final adjustment of Virginia's first-order perimeter did not come about for more than three-quarters of a century, and would not have occurred if the War Between the States had not permitted the opportunity for major political surgery. Virginia's Appalachian Plateau districts were settled not so much by immigrants from her older established areas as by small farmers moving down from the western parts of Pennsylvania. These people felt little in common with the residents of the Tidewater, Piedmont, or even the Great Valley of Virginia. They came to resent perceived unequal treatment by the government in Richmond, especially concerning matters of taxation and representation formulae involving slave ownership. When Virginia withdrew from the Federal Union to join the Confederate States of America in 1861, the legal conditions presented themselves for Virginia's western counties to secede themselves, and with the backing of the government in Washington. This was done in 1862, and the new State of West Virginia was recognized as one of its component parts by the government in Washington D.C. in 1863.

Because the confederacy lost its bid to establish a separate federal union, the objections of the occupied eastern Virginians to the loss of western counties were ineffectual and eventually abandoned. In 1866, during the earliest phases of Reconstruction, two last Virginia counties at the lower end of the Shenandoah Valley were transferred to West Virginia despite the fact that they had opted with confederate Virginia during the war. This transfer was effected by the

Federal Government so that the strategic lower Shenandoah would not return to a former secessionist state's control, on the bare chance that there might be a future need by pro-Union forces for that area to be securely in hand. This transfer was again objected to weakly but without success.¹⁰

CONCLUSION

Since the formation of West Virginia, and the adjustment of county subordination this required, the political profile of Virginia has remained constant except for minor adjustments in a few places. Virginia is a first-order polity which passed through several phases of perimeter adjustment until jurisdictional stability was attained. In her earliest incarnations, totally unrealistic antecedent boundaries were stretched across a continent whose characteristics were almost completely unknown. Once awareness of size and difficulties of communication and administration became clearer, segments were trimmed away as new grants were made of land previously claimed by Virginia but outside her barest nominal control. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were periods during which astronomical and geometrical designations of Virginia's territory were made, an exception being the Potomac river boundary formed with Maryland. By the eighteenth century enough exploration had been carried out so that further polity adjustments were made in other terms. Reductions of claimed extent were oriented for a moment toward physiographic entities such as major rivers and watersheds. Then the matrix of Virginia's county boundaries had become significant enough in the political consciousness of the time for them to be noted when final diminishments of the Virginia realm occurred. The amputation of Kentucky and West Virginia both amounted to first-order boundary adjustments carried out along the political fracture lines of established second-order boundaries.

NOTES.

1 Fried, Morton H., 1967: *The Evolution of Political Society: An Essay in Political Anthropology*, New York: Random House.

2 Sams, Conway Whittle, 1924: *The Conquest of Virginia. The First Attempt*, Norfolk: Keyser-Doherty, pp. 45-65.

3 Sams, Conway Whittle, 1929: *The Conquest of Virginia. The Second Attempt*, Norfolk: Keyser-Doherty, pp. 751-766.

4 Sams, Conway Whittle, 1939: *The Conquest of Virginia. The Third Attempt, 1610-1624*, Norfolk: Keyser-Doherty, pp. 756-773.

5 Sams, 1939, p. 224.

6 Van Zandt, F. K., 1966: *Boundaries of the United States and the Several States*, Geological Survey Bulletin 1212, pp. 143-145.

7 Van Zandt, 1966, pp. 132-134.

8 Van Zandt, 1966, pp. 151-152.

9 Van Zandt, 1966, pp. 145-146.

10 Winberry, John J.: "Formation of the West Virginia-Virginia Boundary," *Southeastern Geographer* 17(2): 108-124.

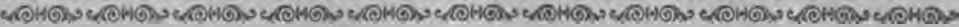
Table 1. Phases in the Evolution of Virginia's First-Order Boundary

Phase	Date	Notes
FORMATION	1585-87	Raleigh granted exploitation privileges within a 600-mile radius in the New World; placement of settlers on Roanoke Island fails, but vicinity receives name of Virginia.
	1606	London and Plymouth companies granted rights to lands in North America in the "First Charter"; Virginia re-defined as lying between parallels 34°N. and 45°N.
	1609	London Company re-chartered and given exclusive rights to lands in Virginia within 200 miles north and south of Old Point Comfort at the southernmost tip of the Delmarva Peninsula "west and northwest" from sea to sea.
	1612	London Company re-chartered to include islands off-shore in the territory of Virginia lying between 30°N. and 41°N.
	1620	Northern limit of Virginia affirmed with definition of New England lying north of 41°N.
EARLY ADJUSTMENTS	1629	Heath granted exploitation rights south of 36°N., moving southern limit of Virginia north 2 degrees of latitude.
	1632	Baltimore granted exploitation rights north of the Potomac River, moving northern limit of Virginia south 120 miles in coastal areas.
	1663	Albemarle group granted exploitation rights to Carolina, defined as south of 36°N. Delmarva Peninsula limits of Virginia set at approximately 38°N.
	1665	Albemarle group re-chartered with southern boundary of Virginia defined at 36°30'N.
LATE ADJUSTMENTS	1763	Conclusion of Seven Years War sets western limits of Virginia at Mississippi River.
	1774	Quebec Act transfers all Virginia claims north of Ohio River to Quebec.
	1776	Revolutionary government of Virginia reclaims losses under Quebec Act, less areas of overlapping claims by Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut.
	1784	State government of Virginia cedes all claims of land northwest of Ohio River to the Federal Government of the United States.
	1789	State government of Virginia permits territorial cession of counties comprising the Kentucky territory.

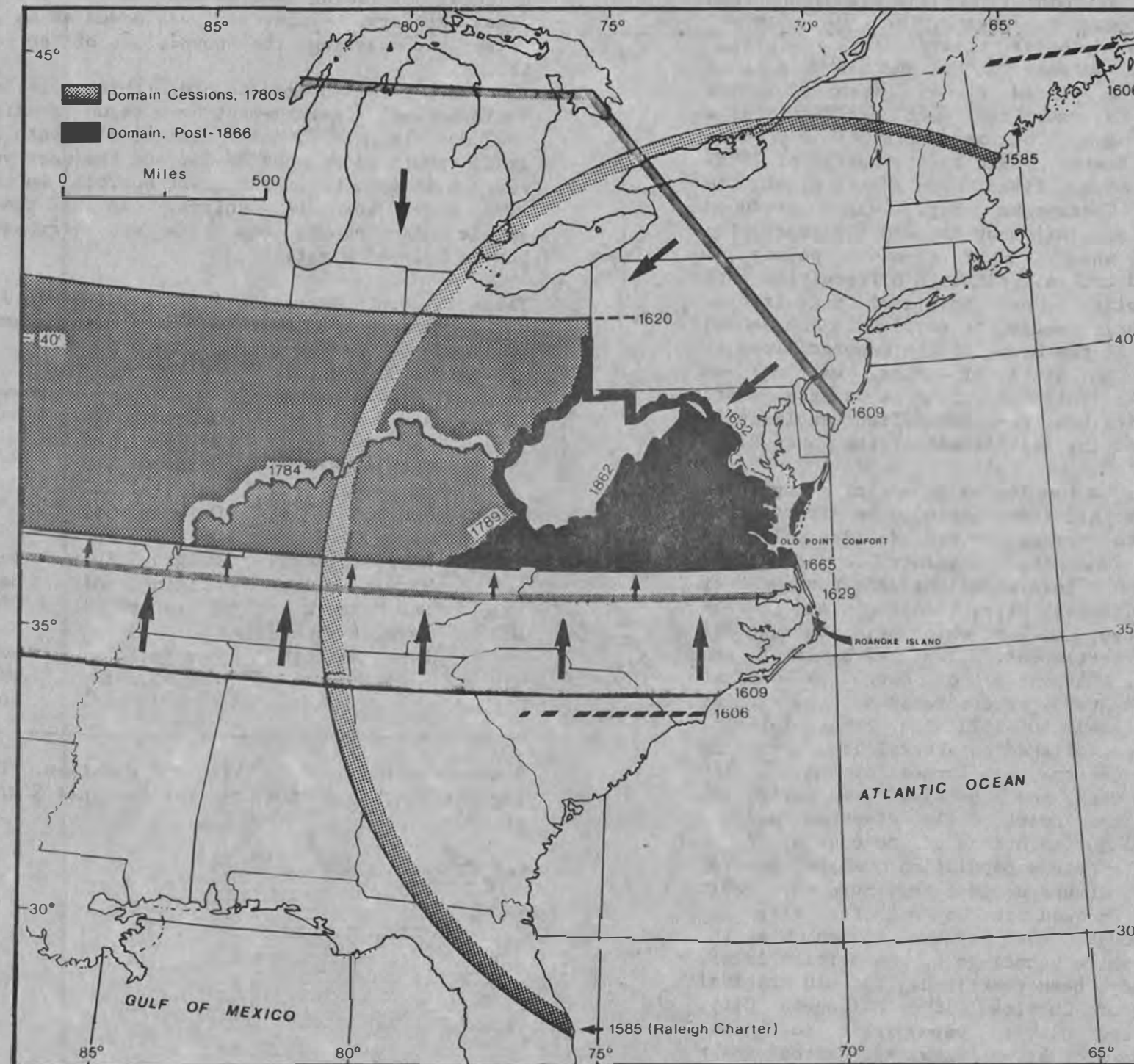
Table 1 (contd.) Phases in the Evolution of Virginia's First-Order Boundary

Phase	Date	Notes
STABILIZATION	1862	Block of counter-secessionist counties form independent state of West Virginia from Virginia's western lands.
	1866	On conclusion of the War Between the States, the Federal Government detaches two tactically-placed Virginia counties and appends them to West Virginia.

Source: Sams, 1939: 202-231; Van Zandt, 1966: 143-151.



VIRGINIA CLAIMS AND CESSIONS, 1585-1866



1634-1640

The first successful English colony in North America was begun at Jamestown in 1607. James I authorized two colonial attempts in a "Virginia" stated to lie between 34°N. and 45°N. A First Colony would be placed by a Company of London merchants in the southern part of Virginia; a Second Colony backed by merchants of Plymouth, Bristol, and Exeter would locate north of 38°N. The London Company fixed upon a site within the environs of Chesapeake Bay, which produced establishment some miles up the James Estuary of a nucleus from which the first-order polity of Virginia would evolve. Although difficulties with disease, supplies, and political organization marred its early years, it survived. The Second Colony, made at the mouth of the Kenebec River in what is now the State of Maine, was not so fortunate and perished after a single year. Thereafter Virginia was identified exclusively with the enlarging settlement of the James River hinterland.

Only after a tumultuous decade of struggle in the wilderness did there begin to be efforts made in Virginia to arrange a second-order political system. In June 1617 Governor Samuel Argyll identified four "incorporations and parishes" of James City, Charles City, Henrico, and Kikotan (Elizabeth City), each of which held at least one borough-like settlement. Two years later the first General Assembly of burgesses met at Jamestown with two representatives from each of the boroughs, and in 1622 the first inferior courts were established at several locations. By 1624 monthly courts were formed for Charles City and Elizabeth City, and a detailed land survey was begun both to quiet title disputes and to apportion legal jurisdictions of the courts.

By 1634 the colony population numbered several thousands and it was decided that more than court jurisdictions needed to be set for Virginia. Naturally enough the system chosen was the contemporary shire structure of the British Isles, as has already been described. The old original corporations of Charles City, Elizabeth City, James City, and Henrico were split to permit creation of Warwick River (Warwick), Warrosquyoake (Isle of Wight), and Charles River (York), making

a total of seven "shires" in the vicinity of the James Estuary. Accawmack was added as an eighth shire encompassing the population of the Eastern Shore.

Further adjustments to this preliminary jurisdictional arrangement were begun immediately. New Norfolk was created out of Elizabeth City's lands south of Hampton Roads, and the next year it was split into Upper and Lower Norfolk, so that by 1637 there were ten shires. In 1637 the first simple name change was made when Warrosquyoake became Isle of Wight.

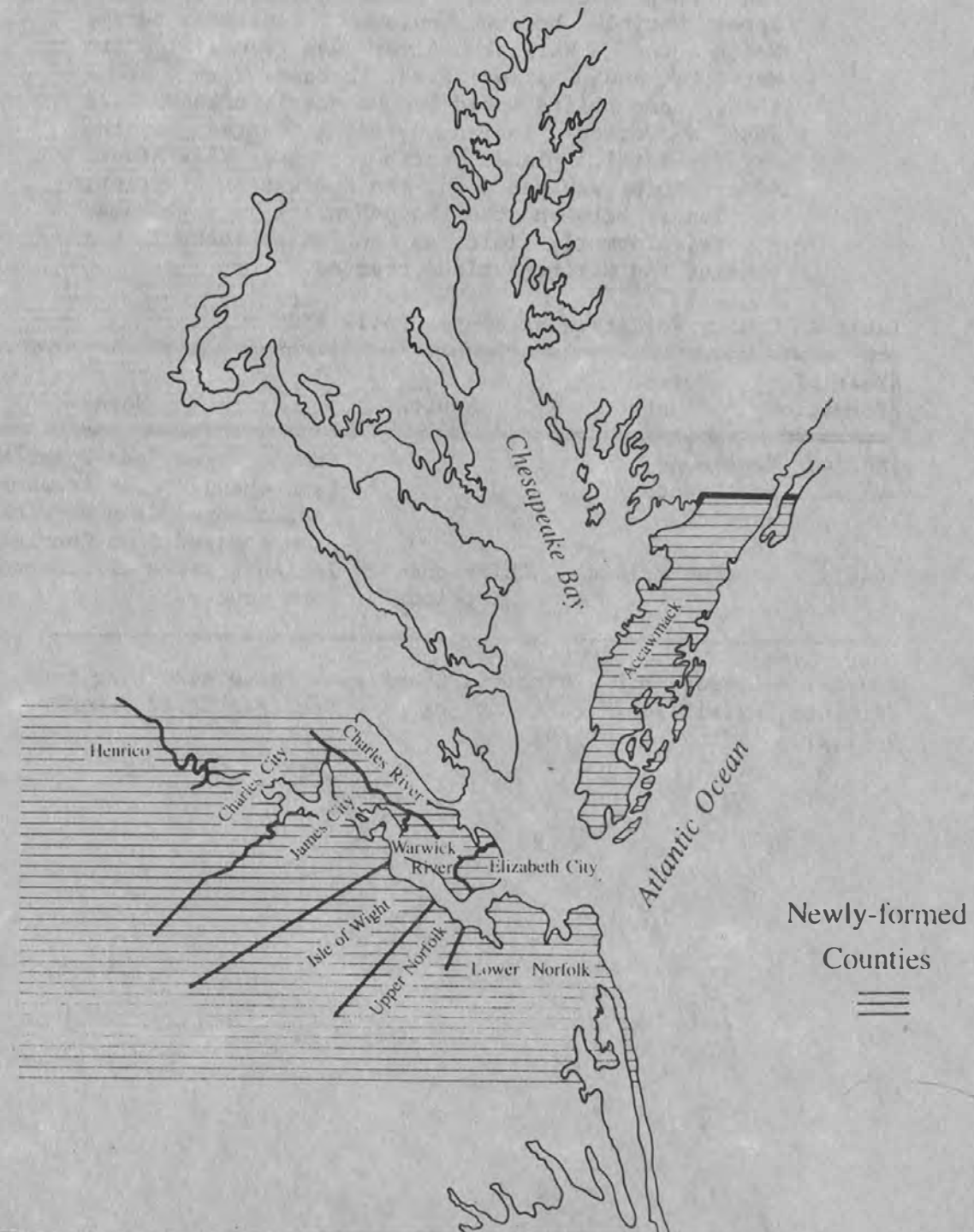
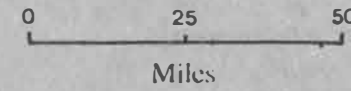
Table 2. County Formation Activity, 1634-1640

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1634	Accawmack	Original Shire	Became Northampton in 1642/43.
--	Charles City	Original Shire	
--	Charles River	Original Shire	Became York in 1642/43.
--	Elizabeth City	Original Shire	
--	Henrico	Original Shire	
--	James City	Original Shire	
--	Warrosquyoake	Original Shire	Became Isle of Wight in 1637.
--	Warwick River	Original Shire	Became Warwick in 1642/43.
1636	New Norfolk	Elizabeth City	Divided and extinguished in 1637.
1637	Isle of Wight		Name changed from Warrosquyoake.
--	Lower Norfolk	New Norfolk	New Norfolk divided and
--	Upper Norfolk	New Norfolk	extinguished; Upper Norfolk became Nansemond in 1642/43.

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 90-91.

Virginia Counties

1634-1640



1641-1650

The period of the 1640s was a time of political consolidation in Virginia. By 1642 it had been decided to rename several counties. Upper Norfolk became Nansemond; Accawmack became Northampton; Warwick River was simplified to Warwick; and Charles River became York. After this, name shifts would become nearly unknown. In 1644 a serious Indian uprising flared in the lightly-settled lands north of the York River. After this was put down, the Chickacoan District, or lands between the Rappahannock and Potomac rivers, formerly left as an Indian reserve, was annexed and Northumberland created.

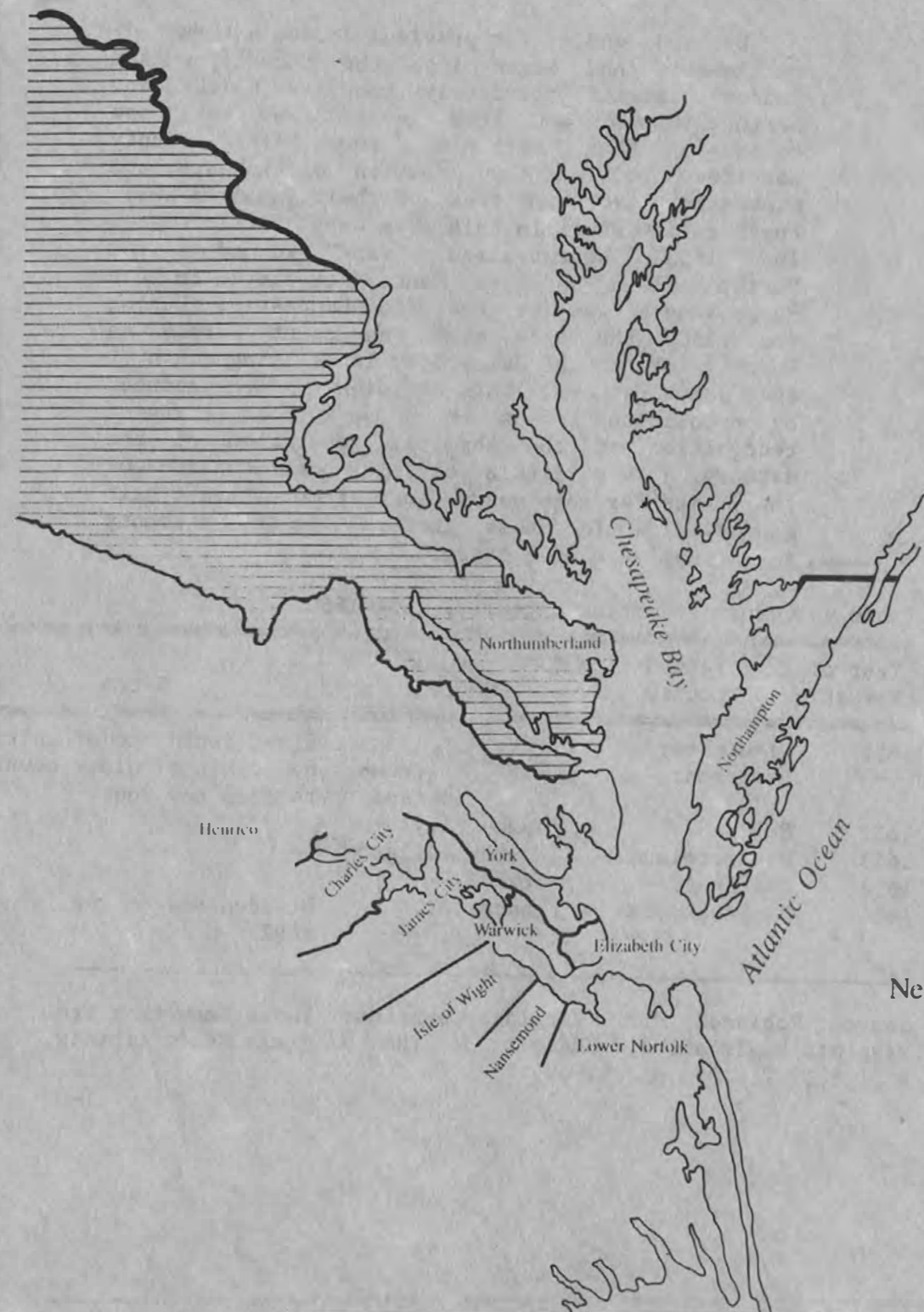
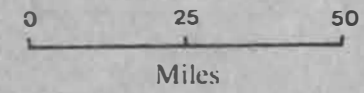
Table 3. County Formation Activity, 1641-1650

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1642/43	Nansemond		Name changed from Upper Norfolk.
--	Northampton		Name changed from Accawmack.
--	Warwick		Name changed from Warwick River.
--	York		Name changed from Charles River. 1642/43
1648	Northumberland	Chickacoan District	Indian reserve eliminated to form county.

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 91-92.

Virginia Counties

1641-1650



1651-1660

By the end of the previous decade a thrust of settlement had begun into the recently-seized Indian district previously known as Chickacoan. Northumberland and York received so many new colonists that agitation for better county services produced the creation of Lancaster and Gloucester from portions of their lands in 1651. Further divisions in this area were quickly made. In 1653 Westmoreland was formed from Northumberland and New Kent from York; in 1656 Rappahannock was created from Lancaster. During the 1650s the only other new county formed was Surry, out of the James City lands lying south of the James Estuary. This division was not produced by population influx there so much as it was in recognition of the physical separation of the estuary. Very little activity occurred south of the James for some years, so that more than a half century would pass before further county formations were made there.

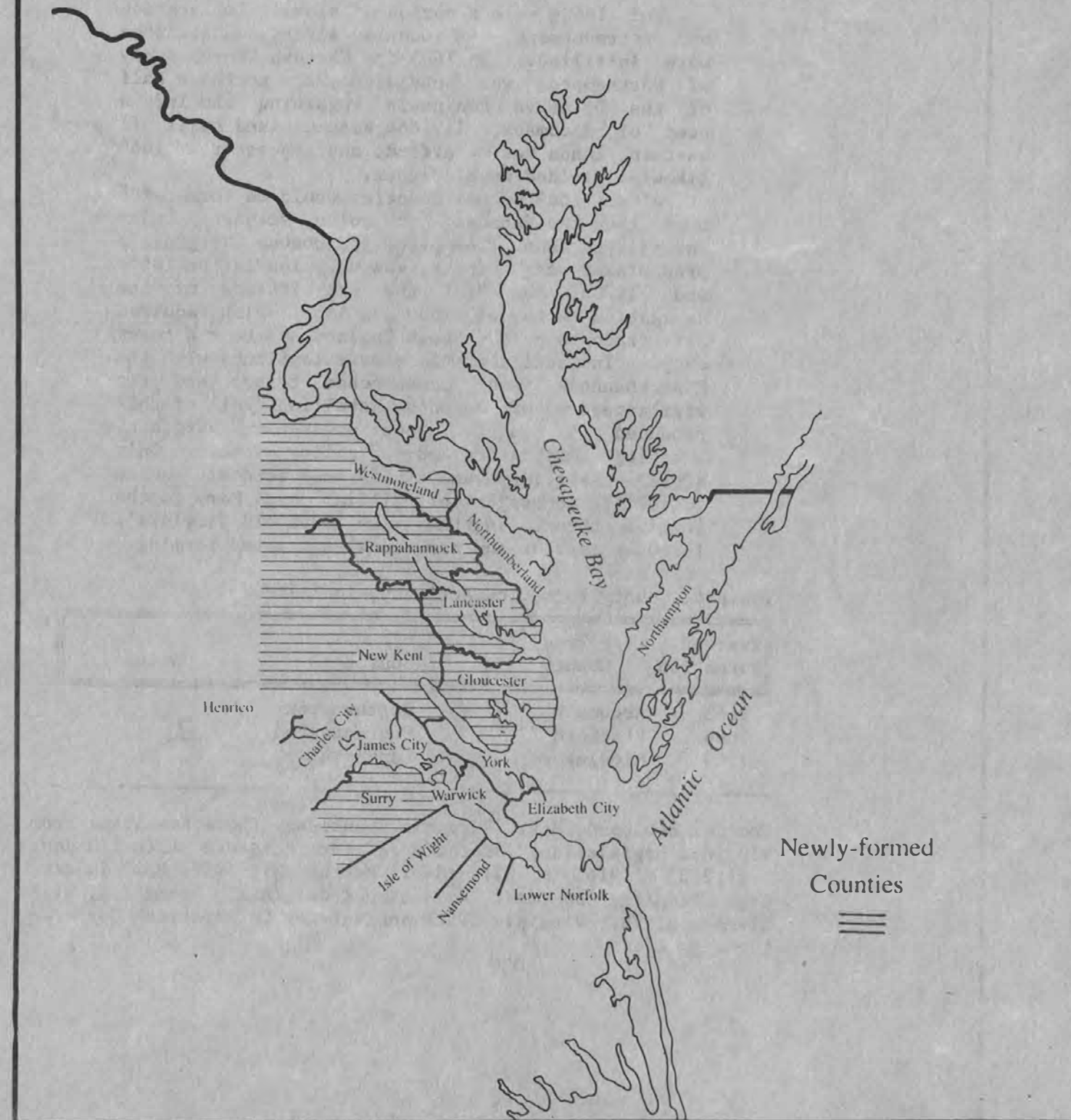
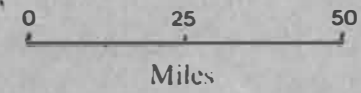
Table 4. County Formation Activity, 1651-1660

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1651	Gloucester	York	First incidence of multiple donorship of older counties to form new ones.
--	Lancaster	York, Northumberland	
1652	Surry	James City	Divided and extinguished in 1692.
1653	Westmoreland	Northumberland	
1654	New Kent	York	
1656	Rappahannock	Lancaster	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 92-93.

Virginia Counties

1651-1660



1661-1670

The 1660s were a period of slowing immigration and retrenchment, as counties already established were in-filled. In 1663 the Eastern Shore county of Northampton was subdivided, the northern half of the Delmarva Peninsula regaining the Indian name of Accomack. In 1664 Westmoreland split off western lands as Stafford, and Lancaster in 1669 likewise yielded up Middlesex.

After 1669 no new counties would be formed for more than two decades. The colony stagnated under several burdens. The price of tobacco, Virginia's predominant cash export, was very low in the 1660s and 1670s due to the restrictions of the Navigation Acts of 1660 and 1663, which required all trade to pass through England and bear a heavy duty. In addition there were conflicts with the Susquehannock and Occaneechee tribes and the vigilanteeism of Bacon's Rebellion. All of this produced a rather poor press for Virginia, limiting immigration and polity fission. Only after the improvement of the economic scene following accession of William and Mary to the English throne in the late 1680s did Virginia's fortunes improve and new counties started forming.

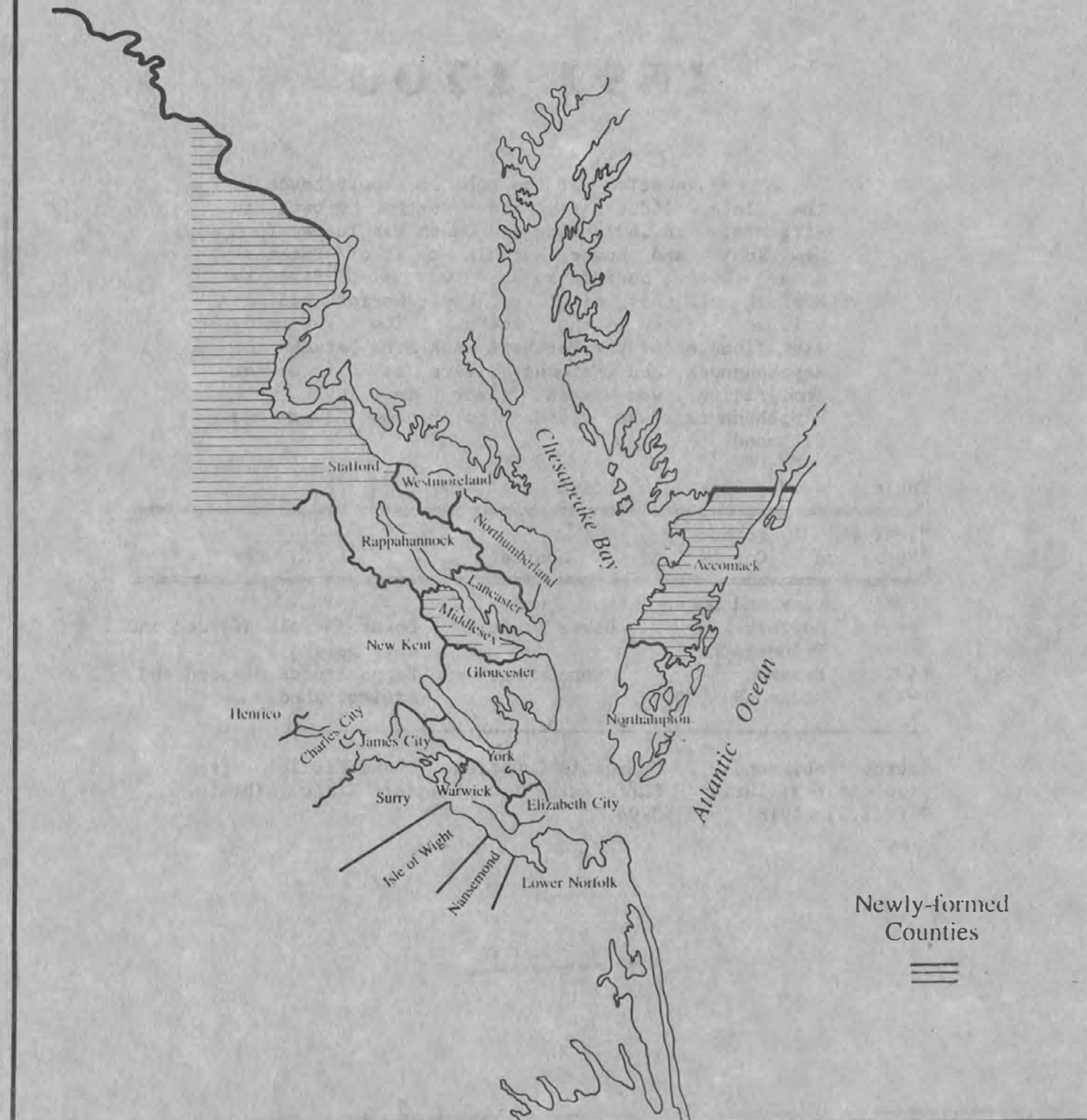
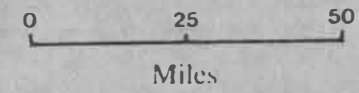
Table 5. County Formation Activity, 1661-1670

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1663	Accomack	Northampton	
1664	Stafford	Westmoreland	
1669	Middlesex	Lancaster	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), p. 93; Hiden, Martha W., 1957: *How Justice Grew. Virginia Counties: An Abstract of their Formation*, Williamsburg, Va.: Virginia 350th Anniversary Celebration Corporation, p. 15.

Virginia Counties

1661-1670



1691-1700

A rejuvenation of the tobacco export trade in the late 1680s fostered further growth in Virginia. In 1691, King and Queen was formed from New Kent, and Lower Norfolk split off Princess Anne. Lower Norfolk's name was simplified to Norfolk at this time, as Upper Norfolk had not existed since the 1640s. The returning significance of the Northern Neck area between the Rappahannock and Potomac rivers as a focus for immigration was made clear in 1692 when Rappahannock was divided to become Essex and Richmond.

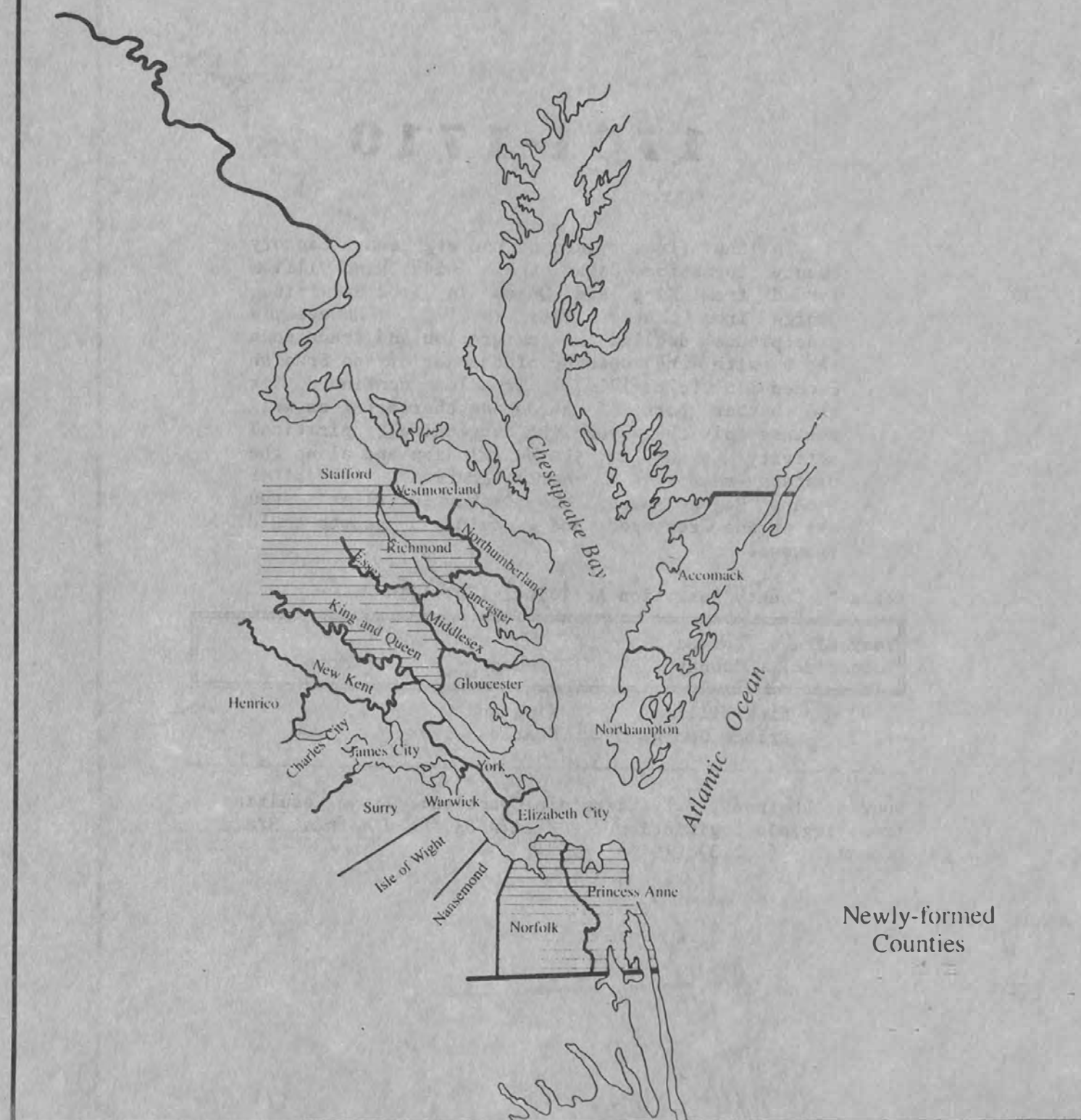
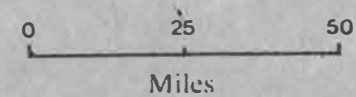
Table 6. County Formation Activity, 1691-1700

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1691	King and Queen	New Kent	
--	Norfolk	Lower Norfolk	Lower Norfolk divided and extinguished.
--	Princess Anne		Rappahannock divided and extinguished.
1692	Essex	Rappahannock	
--	Richmond		

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 93-94.

Virginia Counties

1691-1700



1701-1710

In the first years of the eighteenth century county formation began again with King William formed from King and Queen in 1702 and Prince George from Charles City in 1703. However, a precipitous decline in immigration and trade came about with the opening of the War of the Spanish Succession (1703-1713). Troubles continued for the better part of a decade thereafter as well because of the overnight burgeoning of piratical activity throughout the West Indies and along the eastern seaboard of North America. Only after Woodes Rogers reduced the pirate capital at Nassau was trade restored and Virginia's growth could resume.

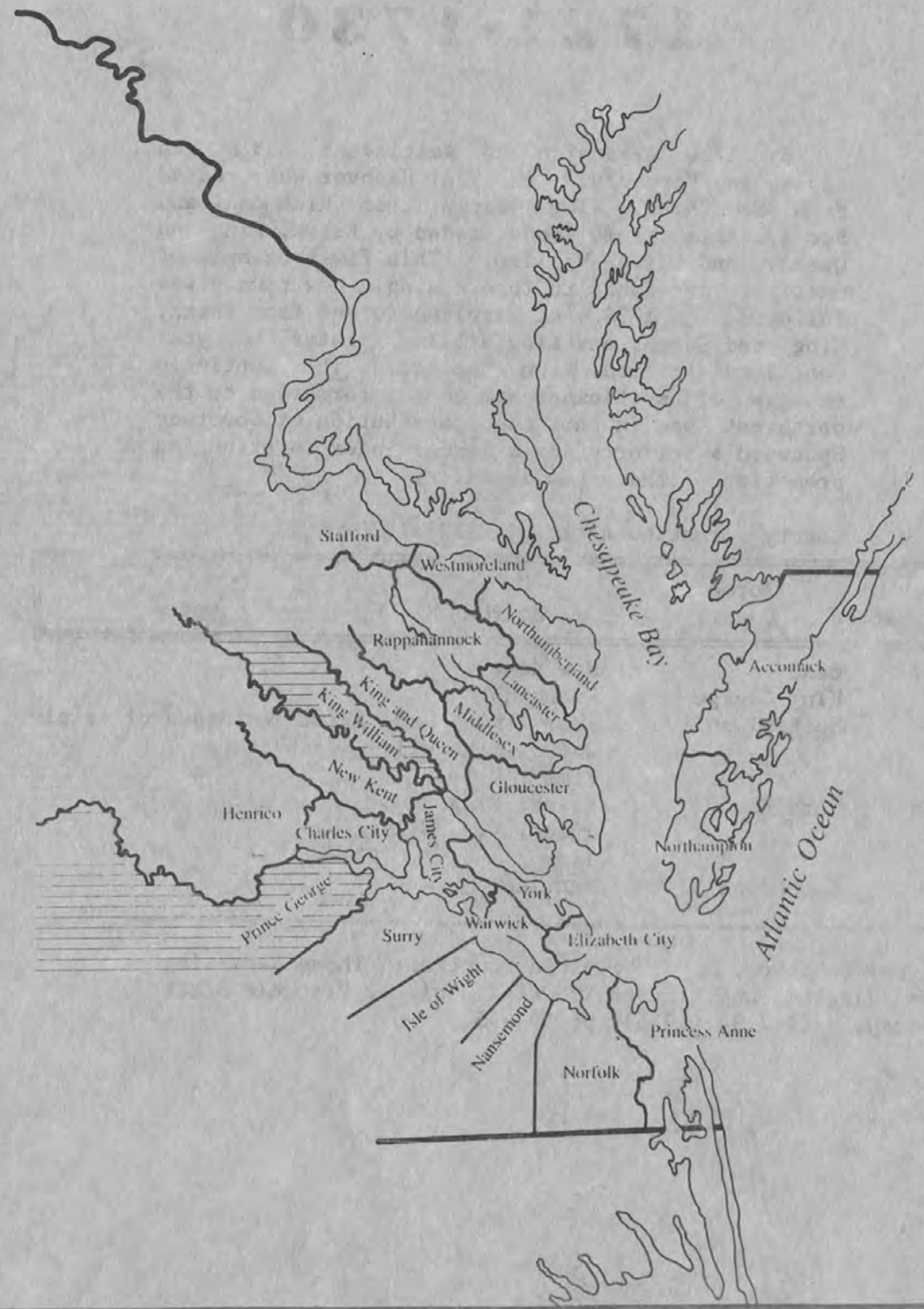
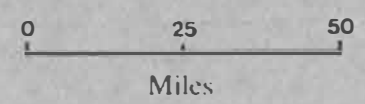
Table 7. County Formation Activity, 1701-1710

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1702	King William	King and Queen	
1703	Prince George	Charles City	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), p. 94.

Virginia Counties

1701-1710



Newly-formed
Counties



1721-1730

By 1720 expansion of settlement had begun again in Virginia. In 1721 Hanover was created from New Kent, King George from Richmond, and Spotsylvania from lands ceded by Essex, King and Queen, and King William. This first example of multiple donorship to form a single new county was followed in 1728 when Caroline formed from Essex, King and Queen, and King William. Later that year Goochland formed from Henrico. The continued impetus of settlement and county formation to the northwest was in part the contribution of Governor Spotwood's efforts as a leader in exploration and promotion of these new lands.

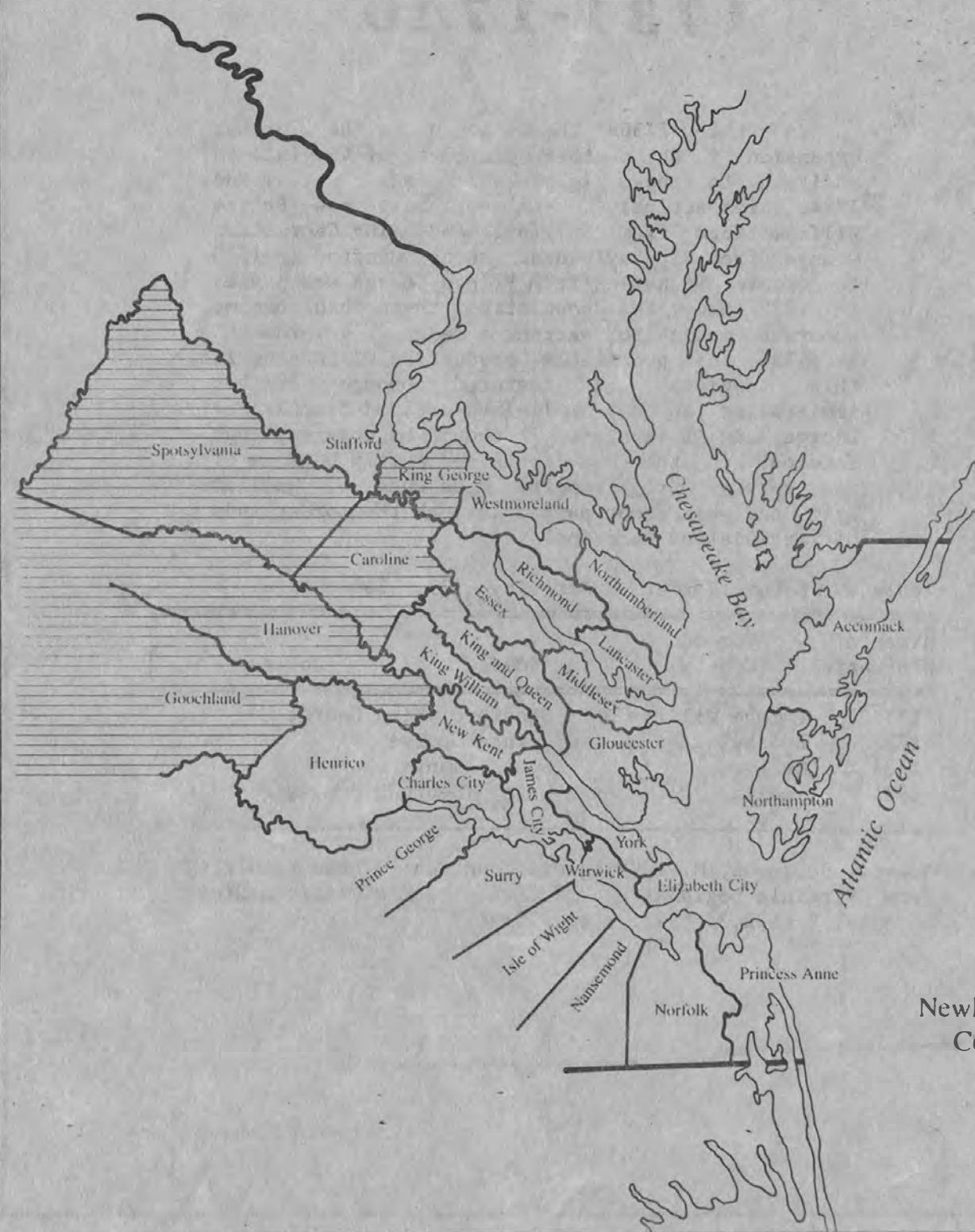
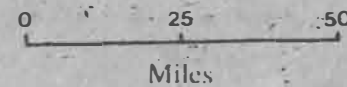
Table 8. County Formation Activity, 1721-1730

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1721	Hanover	New Kent	
--	King George	Richmond	
--	Spotsylvania	Essex, King and Queen, King William	First incidence of triple donorship.
1728	Caroline	Essex, King and Queen, King William	
--	Goochland	Henrico	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 94-95.

Virginia Counties

1721-1730



Newly-formed
Counties



1731-1740

In the 1730s there began to be further expansion in the southern districts of Virginia in addition to those in the northwest. In 1731 and 1734, respectively, the northeast saw Prince William form from Stafford and King George and Orange from Spotsylvania. An act drafted in 1720 to create Brunswick from Prince George was passed in 1732 once the population there had become numerous enough to warrant a separate government. By 1735 the profitable production of tobacco in this region had fostered enough further immigration so that Amelia was created from Prince George and Brunswick. It should be observed that interest in the area increased partly because of the survey party reports made when Col. William Byrd and his group passed through the borderlands of Virginia and Carolina.

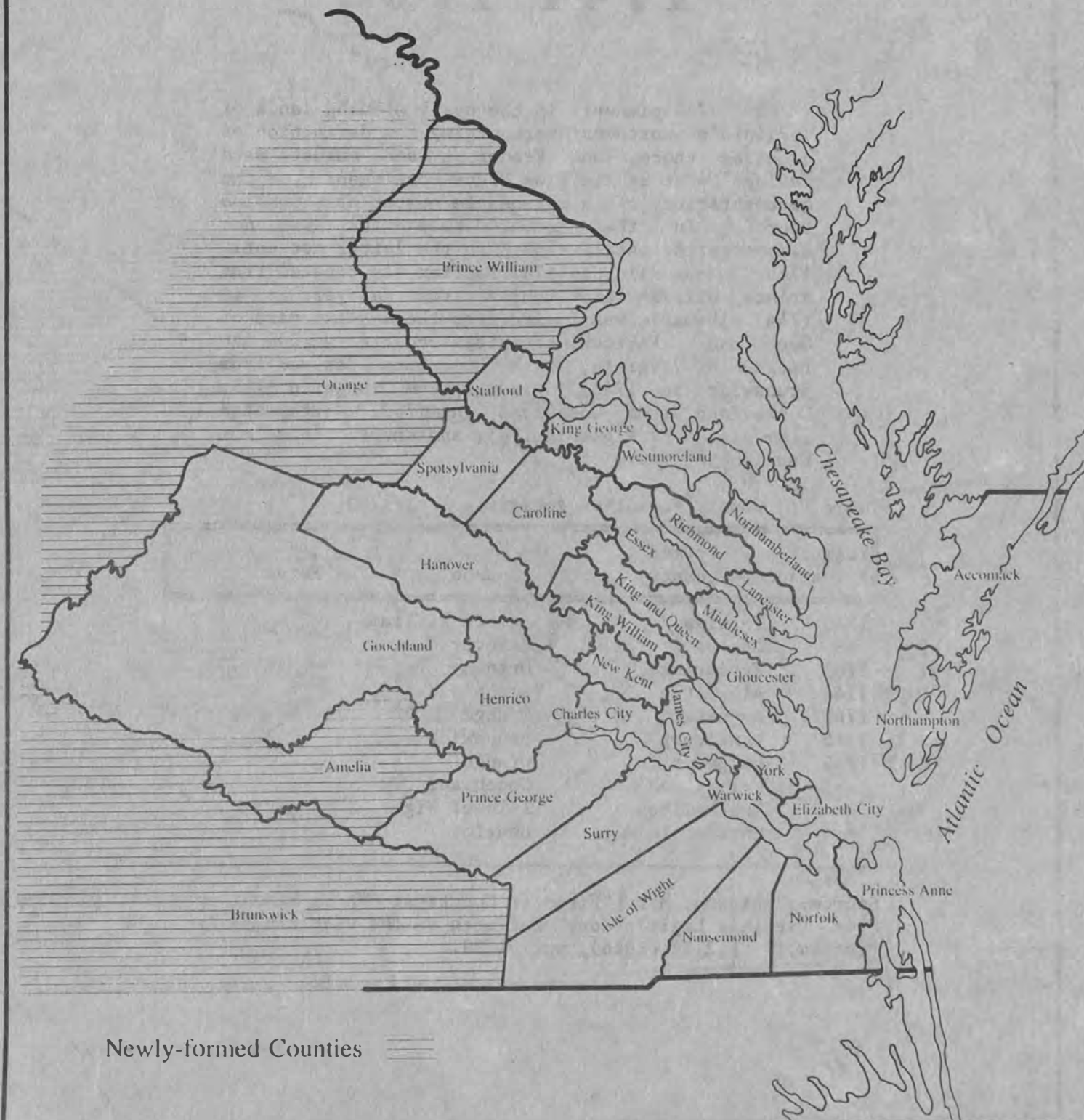
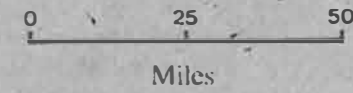
Table 9. County Formation Activity, 1731-1740

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1731	Prince William	Stafford, King George	
1732	Brunswick	Prince George	
1734	Orange	Spotsylvania	
1735	Amelia	Prince George, Brunswick	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 95-96.

Virginia Counties

1731-1740



Newly-formed Counties

1741-1750

By 1738 pioneers in the newly opening lands of Virginia's northwest were urging the definition of counties there, and Frederick and Augusta were defined west of the Blue Ridge contingent upon the documentation of a reasonable number of tithables there. In the former case this was not demonstrated until 1743; in the latter not until 1745. Meanwhile, in 1742 Fairfax was created from Prince William and Louisa from Hanover, and in 1744 Albemarle was formed from the western part of Goochland. Further activity occurred across the board in Virginia, with Lunenburg derived from Brunswick in 1746, Culpeper from Orange in 1745, Cumberland from Goochland in 1749, Southampton from Isle of Wight in 1745, and Chesterfield from Henrico in 1749.

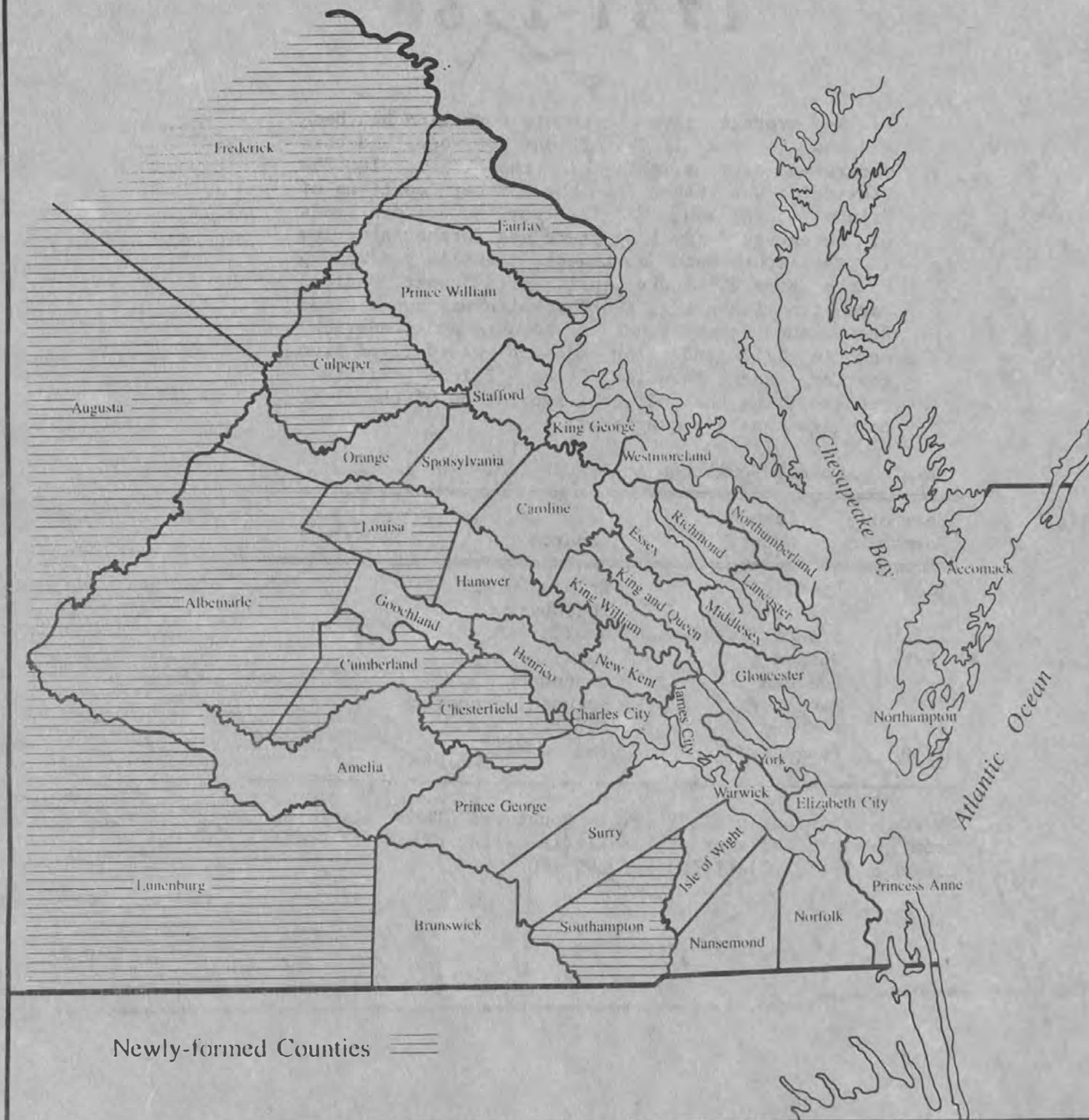
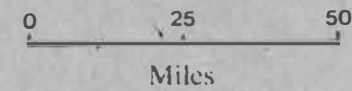
Table 10. County Formation Activity, 1741-1750

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1742	Fairfax	Prince William	
--	Louisa	Hanover	
1743	Frederick	Orange	
1744	Albemarle	Goochland	
1745	Augusta	Orange	
1746	Lunenburg	Brunswick	
1749	Culpeper	Orange	
--	Cumberland	Goochland	
--	Southampton	Isle of Wight	
--	Chesterfield	Henrico	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 99-99.

Virginia Counties

1741-1750



Newly-formed Counties

1751-1760

An average rate of county formation had been reached in the 1740s of one per year, and this moderated only slightly in the 1750s. In 1752 Dinwiddie was taken from the southern portions of Prince George and Halifax from the western lands of Lunenburg. By 1754 there was further activity in the south and northwest. Amelia yielded up Prince Edward, Surry split off Sussex, Bedford came from Lunenburg, and Hampshire was constructed from lands formerly held by Augusta and Frederick. And in 1757 and 1759 Loudoun was derived from Fairfax and Fauquier from Prince William, representing the political separation of the older counties' western quarters.

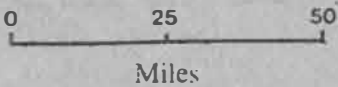
Table 11. County Formation Activity, 1751-1760

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1752	Dinwiddie	Prince George	
--	Halifax	Lunenburg	
1754	Prince Edward	Amelia	
--	Sussex	Surry	
--	Bedford	Lunenburg	
--	Hampshire	Augusta, Frederick	
1757	Loudoun	Fairfax	
1759	Fauquier	Prince William	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 99-100.

Virginia Counties

1751-1760



Newly-formed Counties



1761-1770

The decade of the 1760s evidenced no hindering of county fission despite the outbreak of the French and Indian War (1754-1763). It should be observed that the tide of the conflict turned in favor of England by 1758 with the repulse of two French fleets in the English Channel and the reduction of Fort Louisburg and Fort Frontenac on the Saint Lawrence, which may explain the continued if limited fissive activity on the frontier of Virginia. In 1761 Albemarle gave up lands which became Amherst and Buckingham. But Pontiac's War shortly thereafter fueled the decision by Parliament to issue the Proclamation of 1763 restricting colonial expansion past the Appalachian Divide, thus county fission turned southward. In 1765 Charlotte and Mecklenburg were formed from Lunenburg, and in 1767 Pittsylvania was created from the western lands of Halifax. Only by the decade's end, with the relaxation of Proclamation restrictions, did westward expansion produce a new county. This was the 1770 separation of Botetourt from Augusta.

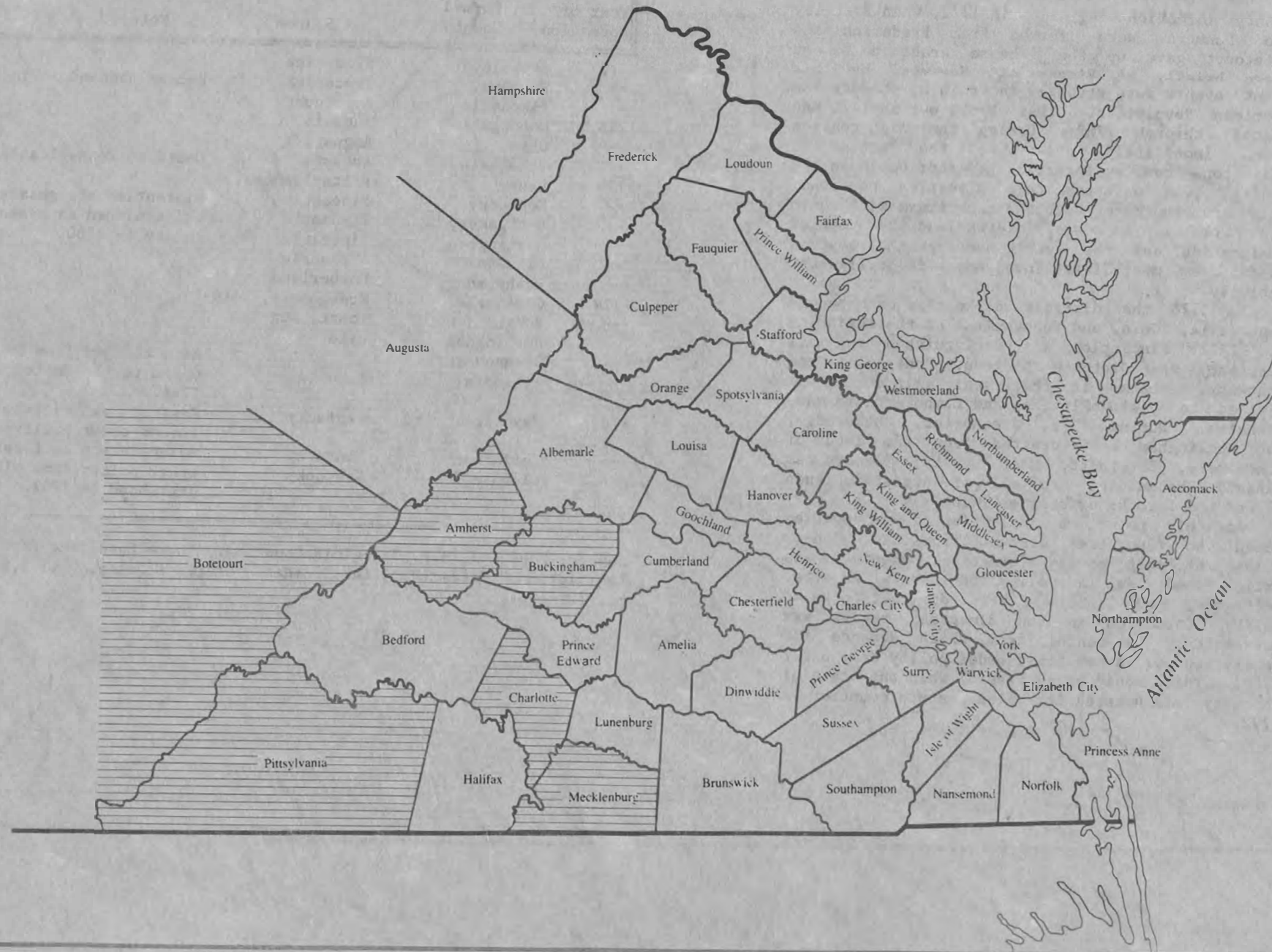
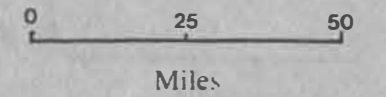
Table 12. County Formation Activity, 1761-1770

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1761	Amherst	Albemarle	
--	Buckingham	Albemarle	
1765	Charlotte	Lunenburg	
--	Mecklenburg	Lunenburg	
1767	Pittsylvania	Halifax	
1770	Botetourt	Augusta	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 100-101.

Virginia Counties

1761-1770



1771-1780

The decision of Parliament to reopen portions of the frontier to settlement produced further county formation beginning in 1772, when Berkeley and Dunmore were formed from Frederick and Botetourt gave up the immense tract to become known briefly as Fincastle. However, by this point events were strongly in train to produce the American Revolution. This broke out in 1775 and lasted through 1783. During the high-tension years immediately prior to the action at Lexington, county formation ceased; but once the conflict was underway this situation reversed. This may indicate both the enthusiasm with which the Proclamation was overwhelmed by popular immigration and the remoteness of the western lands from most direct involvement in belligerent activity.

In 1776 the district of West Augusta became Monongalia, Ohio, and Yohogania. At the beginning of 1777 Fincastle was extinguished and its territory made into Washington, Montgomery, and Kentucky. Later in that year, Albemarle was divided to yield Fluvanna and Cumberland to make Powhatan. During 1778, Greenbrier, Rockbridge, and Rockingham were created from the lands of Montgomery, Botetourt, and Augusta; Dunmore was renamed Shenandoah; and all of Augusta's lands beyond the Ohio River became Illinois.

At this point, a nucleation of new counties could be recognized distant from the pioneer fringe of past county formation. Kentucky was extinguished as a polity to create Fayette, Jefferson, and Lincoln. This disjunct focus of polity formation in the Bluegrass region was unexpectedly a center from which demands for generation of a new first-order polity came after 1780. This would be successful when the State of Kentucky was created from nine western counties in 1792.

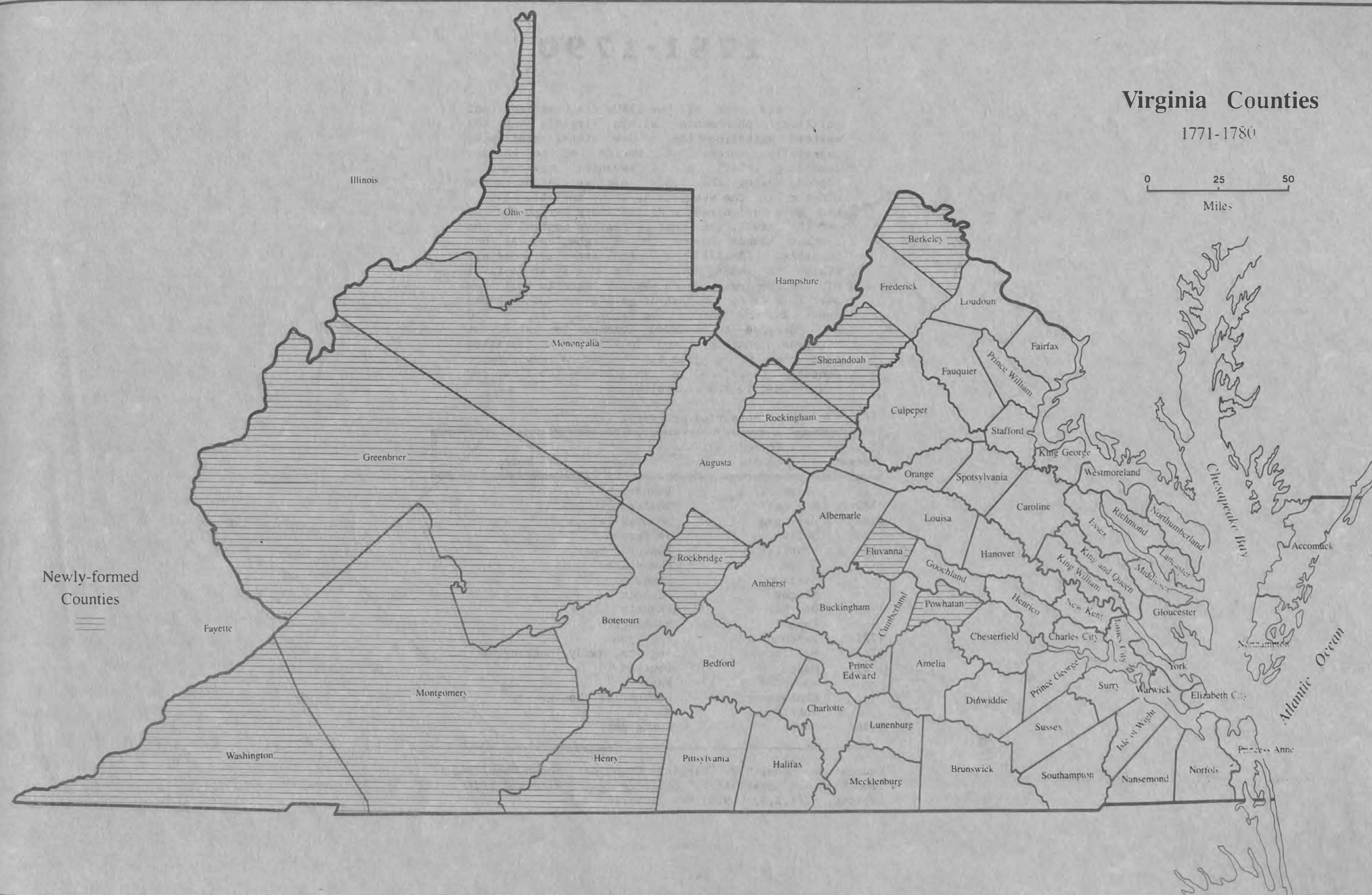
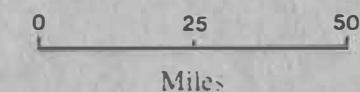
Table 13. County Formation Activity, 1771-1780

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1772	Berkeley	Frederick	
--	Dunmore	Frederick	Became Shenandoah in 1778.
--	Fincastle	Botetourt	
1776	Monongalia	Augusta	
--	Ohio	Augusta	
--	Yohogania	Augusta	Ceded to Pennsylvania in 1786.
1777	Henry	Pittsylvania	
--	Kentucky	Fincastle	Fincastle extinguished; Kentucky
--	Montgomery	Fincastle	extinguished as a second-order
--	Washington	Fincastle	polity in 1780.
--	Fluvanna	Albemarle	
--	Powhatan	Cumberland	
1778	Greenbrier	Montgomery, Bote-	
--	Rockbridge	tourt, Aug-	
--	Rockingham	usta	
--	Shenandoah		name changed from Dunmore.
--	Illinois	Augusta	Ceded to the United States in 1784.
1780	Fayette	Kentucky	Kentucky extinguished as a
--	Jefferson	Kentucky	second-order polity;
--	Lincoln	Kentucky	rejuvenation as first-order polity came with statehood in 1792.

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 101-105.

Virginia Counties

1771-1780



1781-1790

By the turn of the 1780s the most important political phenomenon within Virginia was the western agitation for a new state, manifested especially through a series of conventions demanding this. Out of seventeen new counties formed during the 1780s, six were added to the cluster in the west, as is shown in Table 15. It had been recognized in Williamsburg before the end of the Revolution that effective control of the distant lands beyond the Alleghenies was not feasible. In 1783 the General Assembly ceded all claims to lands north of the Ohio River in favor of the Congress, which happily began to sell them off to finance the cost of government and to repay debts assumed during the fighting. Virginia had also decided to abandon attempts to control the Bluegrass counties, and in 1789 it was clarified that they would shortly become a new state. Kentucky therefore in 1792 became the first new state added to the Federal Union.

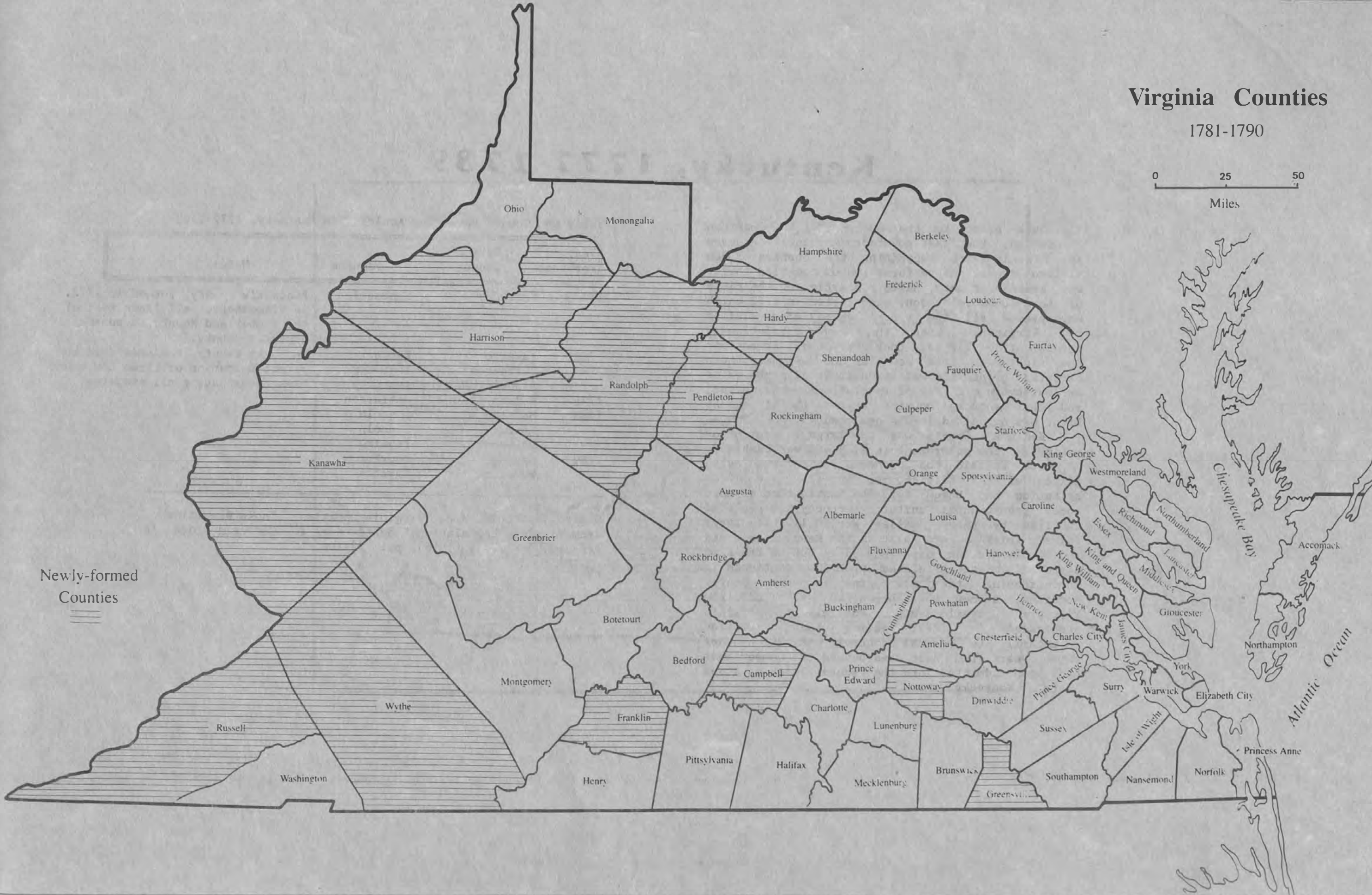
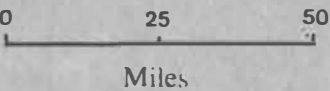
Table 14. County Formation Activity, 1781-1790

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1781	Greensville	Brunswick	
1782	Campbell	Bedford	
1784	Harrison	Monongalia	
1785	Nelson	Jefferson	
1786	Franklin	Bedford, Henry	
--	Hardy	Hampshire	
--	Madison	Lincoln	
--	Mercer	Lincoln	
--	Bourbon	Fayette	
--	Russell	Washington	
1787	Randolph	Harrison	
1788	Pendleton	Augusta, Hardy, Rockingham	
1789	Mason	Bourbon	
--	Woodford	Fayette	
--	Kanawha	Greenbrier, Montgomery	
--	Nottoway	Amelia	
1790	Wythe	Montgomery	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 106-110

Virginia Counties

1781-1790



Newly-formed
Counties

Kentucky, 1777-1789

Just prior to the outbreak of the American Revolution, the last governors appointed to serve in Virginia were supporting the opening of new western lands and the formation of counties there. One immense county, named Fincastle for the title of Lord Dunmore's son, was created in 1772 which encompassed all the trans-Allegheny areas claimed by Virginia. When the new revolutionary government of Virginia took over power, it assumed the rights to form counties and designate their extents. Fincastle was immediately dismembered as an entity in a flurry of revolutionary excitement, and the Kentucky country beyond the Allegheny Front was organized into a new county.

Kentucky County was too large to control or monitor. The government in Richmond was unable to do much to aid the pioneers against the Indian allies of the British, so by the late 1770s agitation had begun for the institution of more local governmental units. Kentucky was replaced in 1780 by three smaller but still quite large units, which in turn split as the Revolution ended and Confederation days ensued. But as the same sorts of distance-related problems continued in administering the now nine Kentucky country counties, a new move began to split off from Virginia overlordship entirely. Virginia acquiesced in 1789, ceding these counties voluntarily to Federal control. Within another three years, the whole area beyond the Cumberlands had been admitted into the Federal Union as a new State of Kentucky.

Table 15. County Formation Activity in Kentucky, 1777-1792

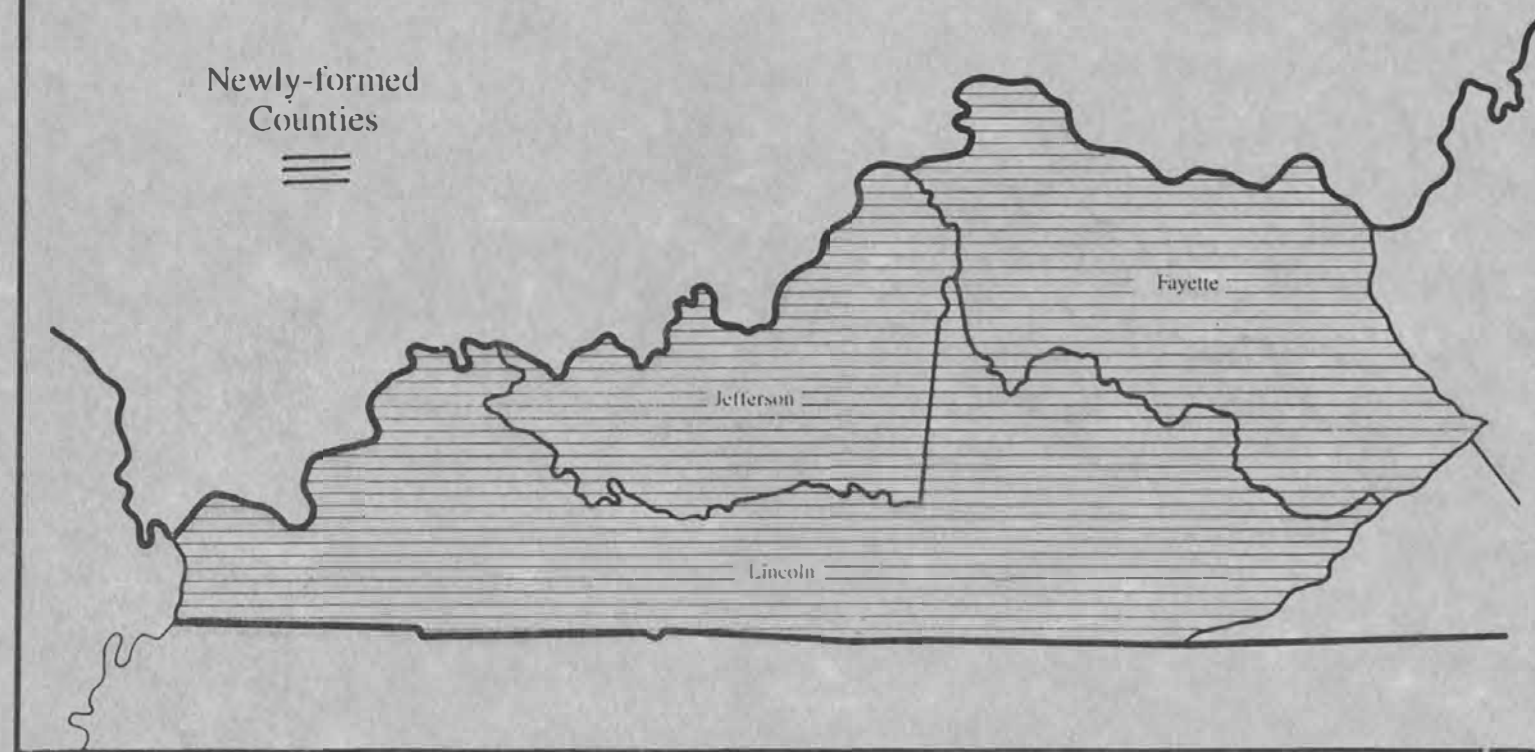
Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1777	Kentucky	Fincastle	Fincastle county, formed in 1772, is dismembered; all lands west of the Cumberland Mountains became Kentucky County.
1780	Fayette	Kentucky	Kentucky County is dismembered to permit formation of three new counties encompassing all its area.
--	Jefferson	Kentucky	
--	Lincoln	Kentucky	
1785	Nelson	Jefferson	
1786	Madison	Lincoln	
--	Mercer	Lincoln	
--	Bourbon	Fayette	
1789	Mason	Bourbon	
--	Woodford	Fayette	

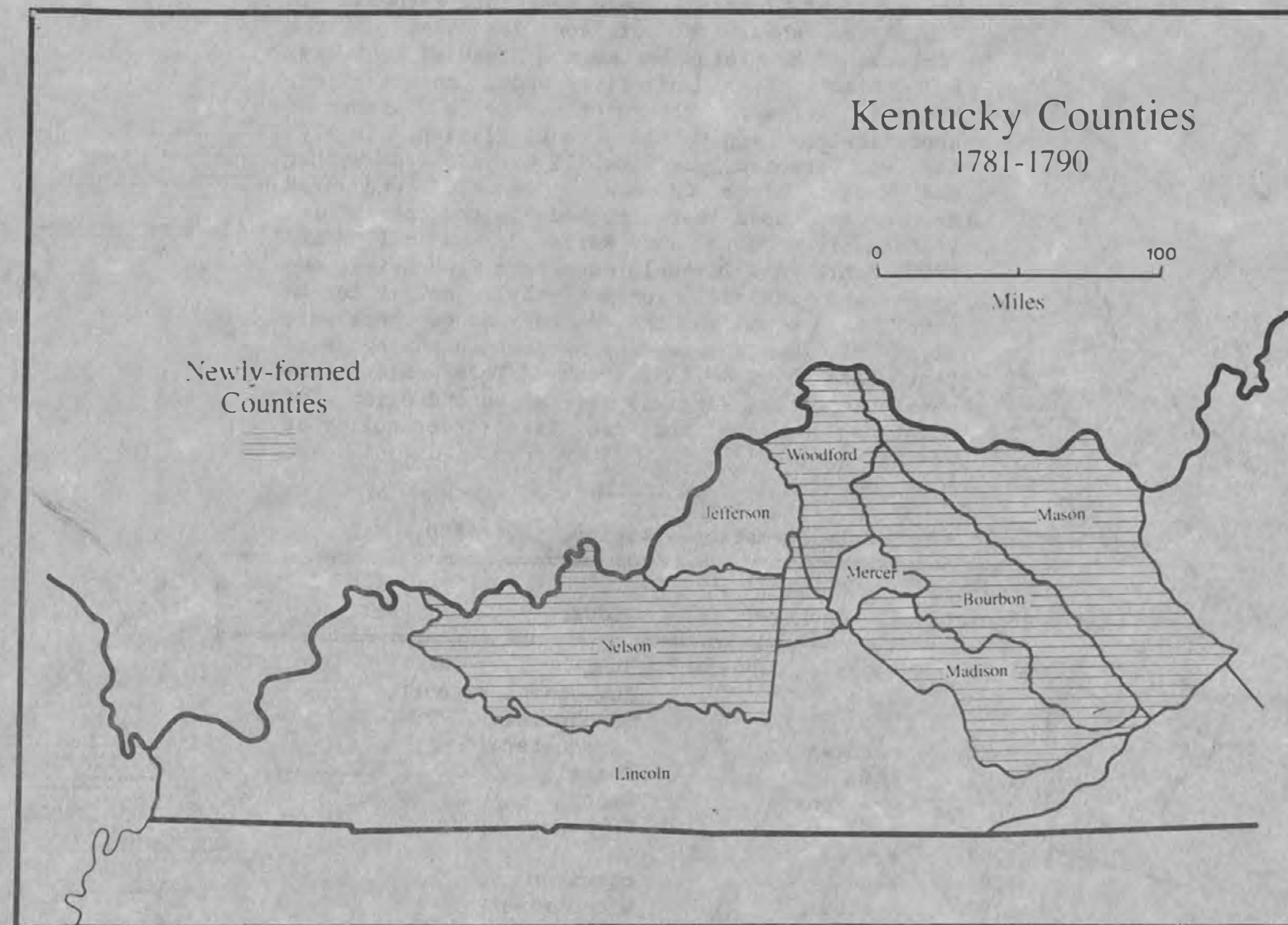
Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 103-108.

Kentucky Counties 1771-1780

0 100
Miles

Newly-formed
Counties





1791-1800

As the 1790s began, several important readjustments in the political scene of Virginia occurred. Patrick was formed from Henry, Bath from Augusta, Botetourt, and Greenbrier, and in the Tidewater the formerly sparsely occupied portions of Gloucester were made into Mathews. In 1792, the whole set of counties west of the Cumberland Mountains became the State of Kentucky. By this action of first-order redefinition, Virginia returned for a time to a pattern of approximately sequential county fission. In 1793 Lee was created from Russell, Grayson from Wythe, and Madison from Culpeper. In 1797 and 1798 Brooke and Wood were formed in the Appalachian Plateau from Ohio and Harrison; and in 1799 and 1800 Monroe and Tazewell came from Greenbrier, and Wythe and Russell, respectively. But it can be seen that even as the century ended there were signs of future secondary nucleation analogous to that lately seen in Kentucky. This would foster severance from Virginia of a second group of counties to form the new first-order polity of West Virginia.

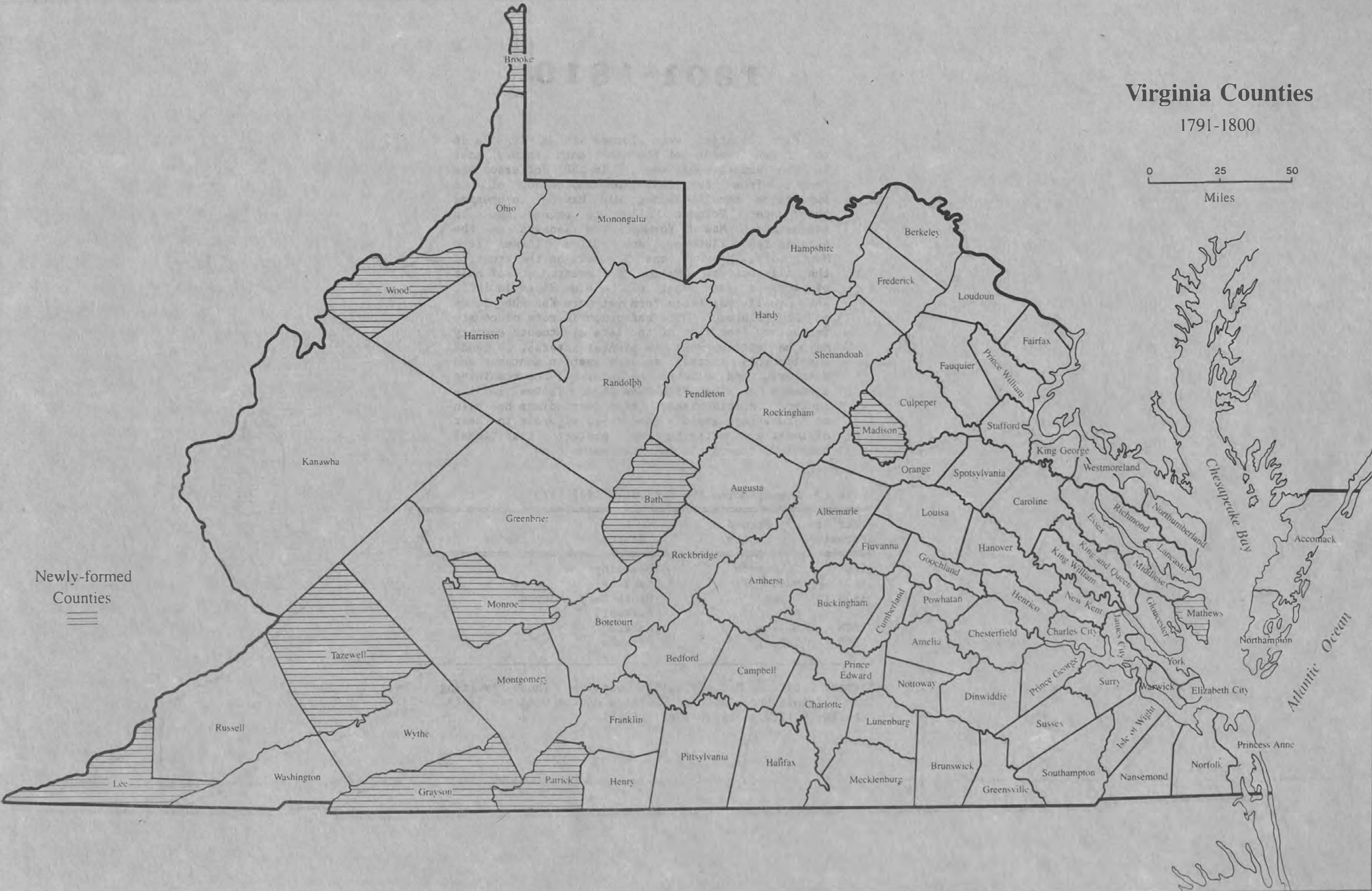
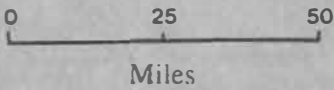
Table 16. County Formation Activity, 1791-1800


Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1791	Patrick	Henry	
--	Bath	Augusta, Botetourt, Greenbrier	
--	Mathews	Gloucester	
1793	Lee	Russell	
--	Grayson	Wythe	
--	Madison	Culpeper	
1797	Brooke	Ohio	
1798	Wood	Harrison	
1799	Monroe	Greenbrier	
1800	Tazewell	Wythe, Russell	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 110-112.

Virginia Counties

1791-1800



Newly-formed
Counties


1801-1810

Five counties were formed within Virginia in the first decade of the nineteenth century, most in the mountainous west. In 1801 Jefferson was formed from Berkeley, an indication of the importance canal-building was having in opening the upper Potomac Valley to pioneering. In mid-decade, Mason formed from Kanawha on the Appalachian Plateau, and Giles formed from Montgomery, Monroe, and Tazewell on the crest of the Alleghenies. Nelson was created out of half of Amherst just east of the Blue Ridge in 1808, and Cabell was taken from yet more Kanawhan lands on the Plateau. The reduction in rate of county formation from that of the late eighteenth century may be attributable to pioneer interest in lands considerably further to the west in Kentucky and Missouri, and also to the impact of the remaining elements of the Five Civilized Tribes in the southern Appalachians. These Amerindians had been acculturating rapidly and were vigorous in their diplomatic activity to protect traditional homelands from Anglo-American occupation.

Table 17. County Formation Activity, 1801-1810

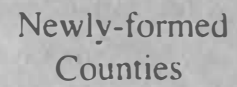
Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1801	Jefferson	Berkeley	
1804	Mason	Kanawha	
1806	Giles	Montgomery, Monroe, Tazewell	
1808	Nelson	Amherst	
1809	Cabell	Kanawha	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 113-114.

1801-1810

0 25 50

Miles



1811-1820

The preoccupation of the United States leading up to and through the War of 1812 was reflected in an absence of county formation until 1814. In that year, Scott was formed from Lee, Russell, and Washington in the upper Ridge and Valley area, and Tyler was taken from Ohio on the northwestern margin of Virginia. Then further fissive activity occurred on the Appalachian Plateau with the creation of Lewis from Harrison in 1816, and in 1818 the forming of Preston from Monongalia and Nicholas from Greenbrier, Kanawha, and Randolph. And in 1820 Berkeley and Harrison provided lands to make Morgan. It should be observed that by this point the pattern of fission had become dominantly oriented toward multiple donorship, a condition that would continue through the end of county formation.

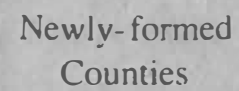
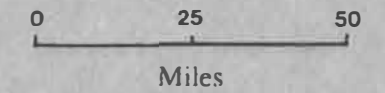
Table 18. County Formation Activity, 1811-1820

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1814	Scott	Lee, Russell, Washington	
--	Tyler	Ohio	
1816	Lewis	Harrison	
1818	Preston	Monongalia	
--	Nicholas	Greenbrier, Kanawha, Randolph	
1820	Morgan	Berkeley, Hampshire	

Source: Robinson, M. P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 115.

Virginia Counties

1811-1820



1821-1830

The 1820s were a period of retrenchment in the county formation process. In 1821 Pocahontas formed from Bath, Pendleton, and Randolph; in 1822 Alleghany likewise was formed from Bath, Botetourt, and Monroe; and in 1824 Logan was provided lands from Giles, Cabell, Tazewell, and Kanawha. The most important event of the decade was the discovery of gold in 1828 on Cherokee lands in northern Georgia. The excitement generated by this produced the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and would shortly dislodge most of the remaining Amerindian claims in the eastern United States. For Virginia, the next two decades would see a rush of settlement into the Appalachian Plateau and the most extensive period of county formation in the state's history as this area was filled by pioneering populations entering the final area of inexpensive lands east of the Mississippi River.

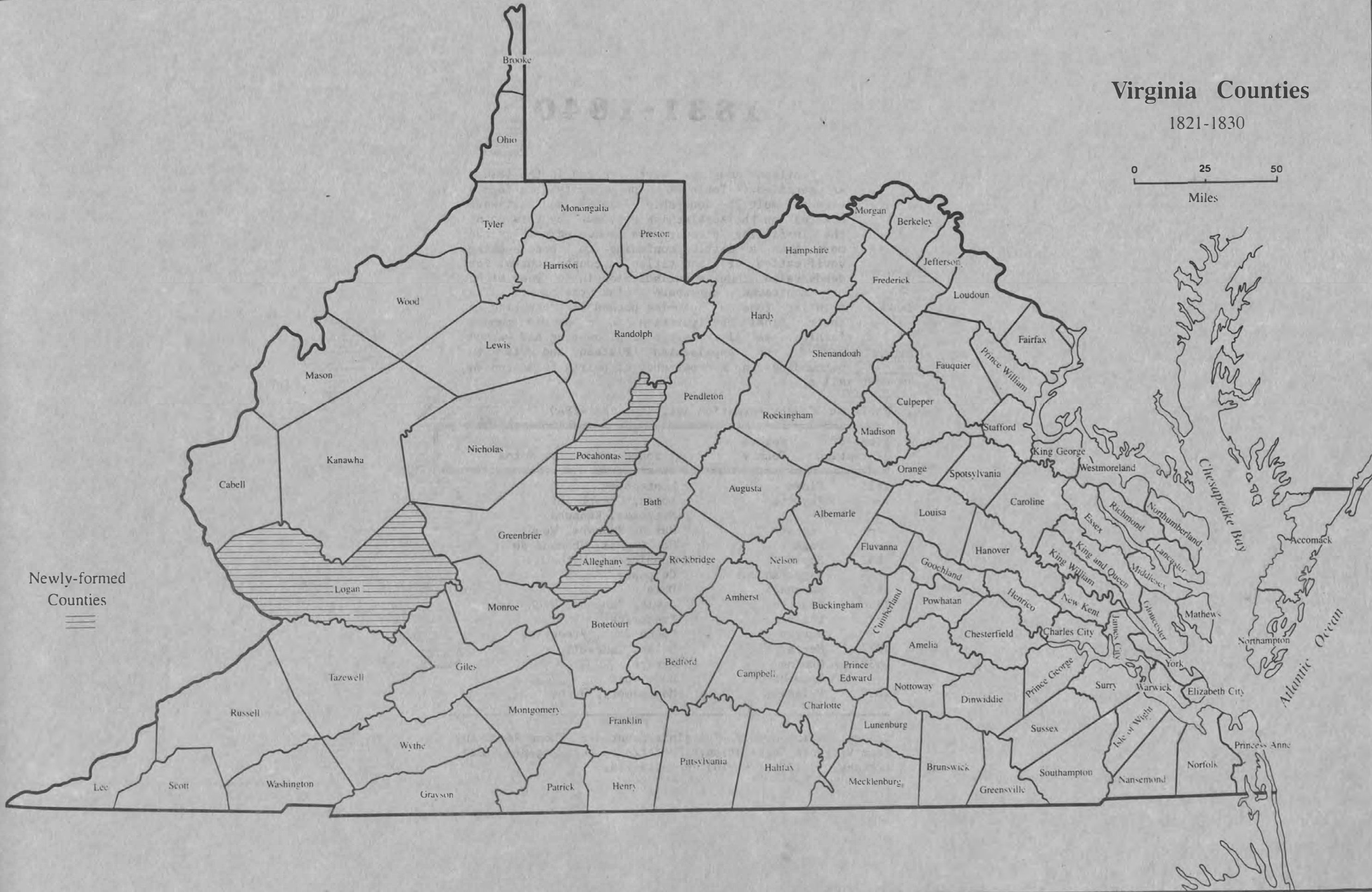
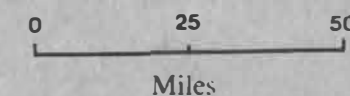
Table 19. County Formation Activity, 1821-1830

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1821	Pocahontas	Bath, Pendleton, Randolph	
1822	Alleghany	Bath, Botetourt, Monroe	
1824	Logan	Giles, Cabell, Tazewell, Kanawha	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 116.

Virginia Counties

1821-1830



Newly-formed
Counties
≡≡≡

1831-1840

Fourteen counties were created in the 1830s, as detailed in Table 20. The majority were formed through multiple donorship of lands, and most were created on the Appalachian Plateau. By this point the in-filling process was becoming complex and more than a little confusing to those seeking verification of land titles in county courts, for deeds valid under a jurisdiction in one year might be monitored somewhere else the next. The frontier zone was becoming pocked with counties in their final configuration in a nearly random fashion, as if the surge of pioneering had washed across the Appalachian Plateau and was now rebounding in a cross-chop of polity formation on all sides.

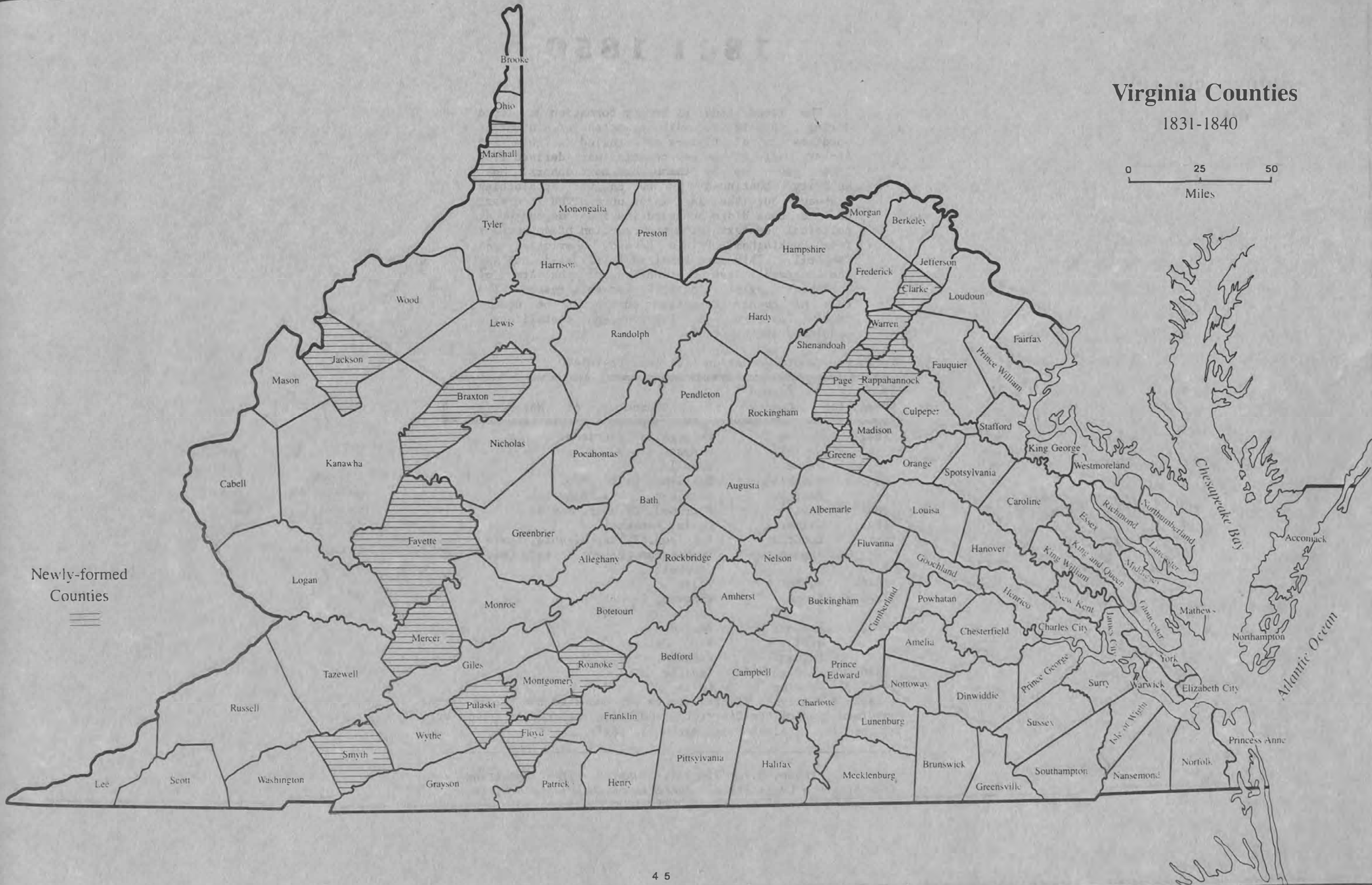
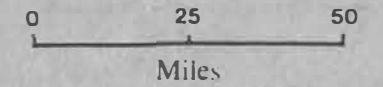
Table 20. County Formation Activity, 1831-1840

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1831	Floyd	Montgomery	
--	Fayette	Logan, Greenbrier, Nicholas, Kanawha	
--	Jackson	Mason, Kanawha, Wood	
--	Page	Rockingham, Shenandoah	
1832	Smyth	Washington, Wythe	
1833	Rappahannock	Culpeper	
1835	Marshall	Ohio	
1836	Braxton	Lewis, Kanawha, Nicholas	
--	Clarke	Frederick	
--	Warren	Shenandoah, Frederick	
1837	Mercer	Giles, Tazewell	
1838	Greene	Orange	
--	Roanoke	Botetourt	
1839	Pulaski	Montgomery, Wythe	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 116-118.

Virginia Counties

1831-1840



1841-1850

The flood tide of county formation developed during the 1840s, with creation of seventeen counties in eight years as detailed in Table 21. Almost half of the new counties were derived from lands given up by three or more donors. Most activity continued to be on the Appalachian Plateau; but the last major unresolved zone east of the Blue Ridge achieved its final second-order political context with the creation of Appomattox from Buckingham, Prince Edward, Charlotte, and Campbell. This area remained fairly wild, and was the natural last destination of the Army of Northern Virginia in 1865 for this reason. The bulk of county formation continued the nearly random pattern of fission and stabilization mentioned above.

Table 21. County Formation Activity, 1841-1850

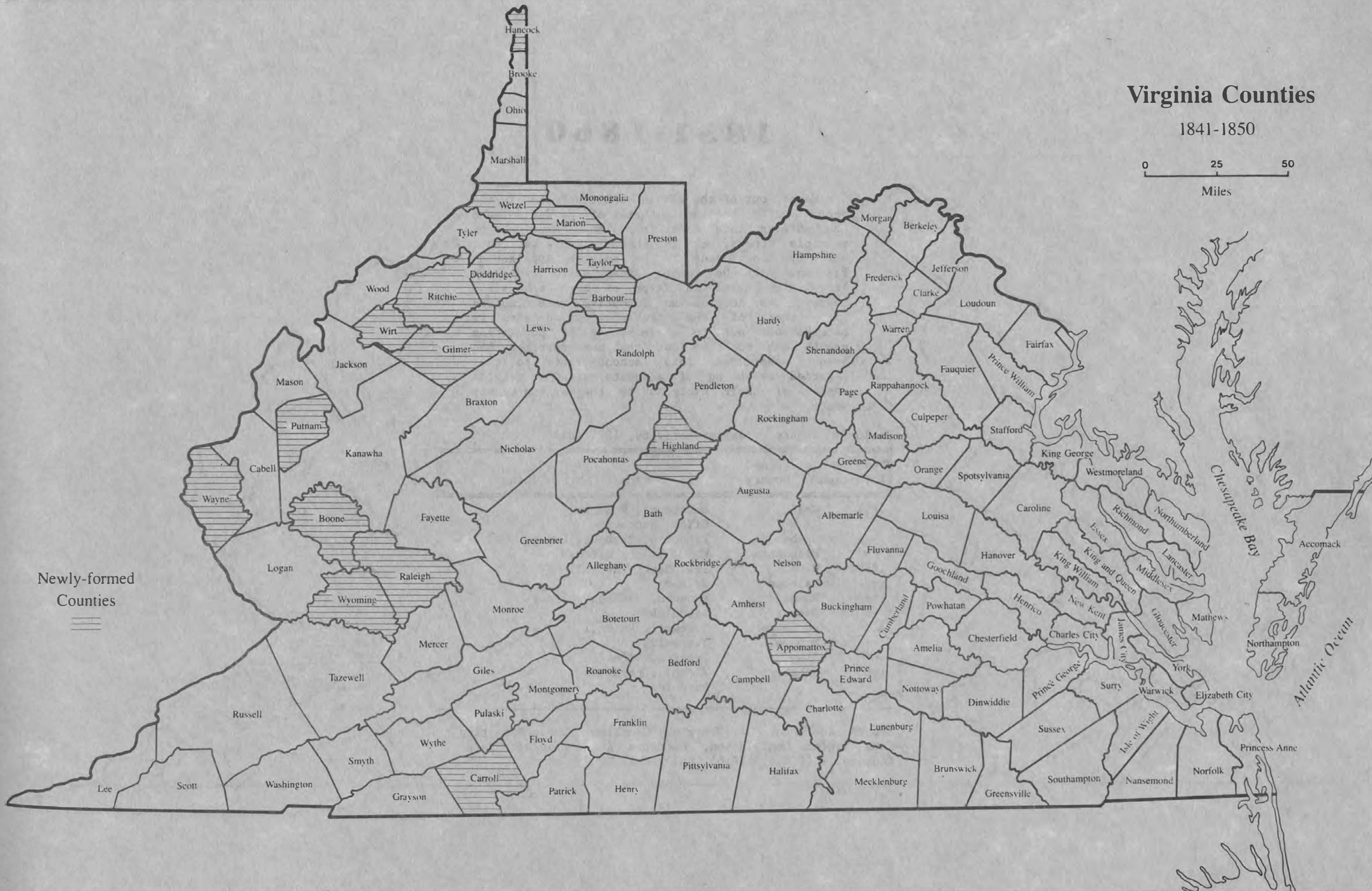
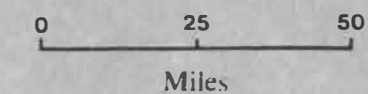
Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1842	Marion	Monongalia, Harrison	
--	Carroll	Grayson	
--	Wayne	Cabell	
1843	Ritchie	Harrison, Lewis, Wood	
--	Barbour	Harrison, Lewis, Randolph	
1844	Taylor	Harrison, Barbour, Marion	
1845	Gilmer	Lewis, Kanawha	
--	Doddridge	Harrison, Tyler, Ritchie, Lewis	
--	Appomattox	Buckingham, Prince Edward, Charlotte, Campbell	
1846	Wetzel	Tyler	
1847 ¹	Boone	Kanawha, Cabell, Logan	
--	Highland	Pendleton, Bath	
1848	Hancock	Brooke	
--	Wirt	Wood, Jackson	
--	Putnam	Kanawha, Cabell, Mason	
1850	Raleigh	Fayette	
--	Wyoming	Logan	

¹ Lands formerly in Fairfax County but ceded to the United States on formation of the District of Columbia returned to become part of the City of Alexandria, March 13, 1847.

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 118-120.

Virginia Counties

1841-1850



1851-1860

Eight out of the eleven counties formed in the decade prior to the outbreak of the War Between the States were made from lands provided by multiple donors, as is shown in Table 22. Most activity continued to be on the Appalachian Plateau, in the remote areas which had been largely by-passed in favor of more accessible lands. The decline in formative rate compared with that of the previous two decades is attributable not to a lessening of population growth but to the fact that most territory had been subdivided into second-order polities regarded as being of adequate size to provide access of their citizens to the various county seats.

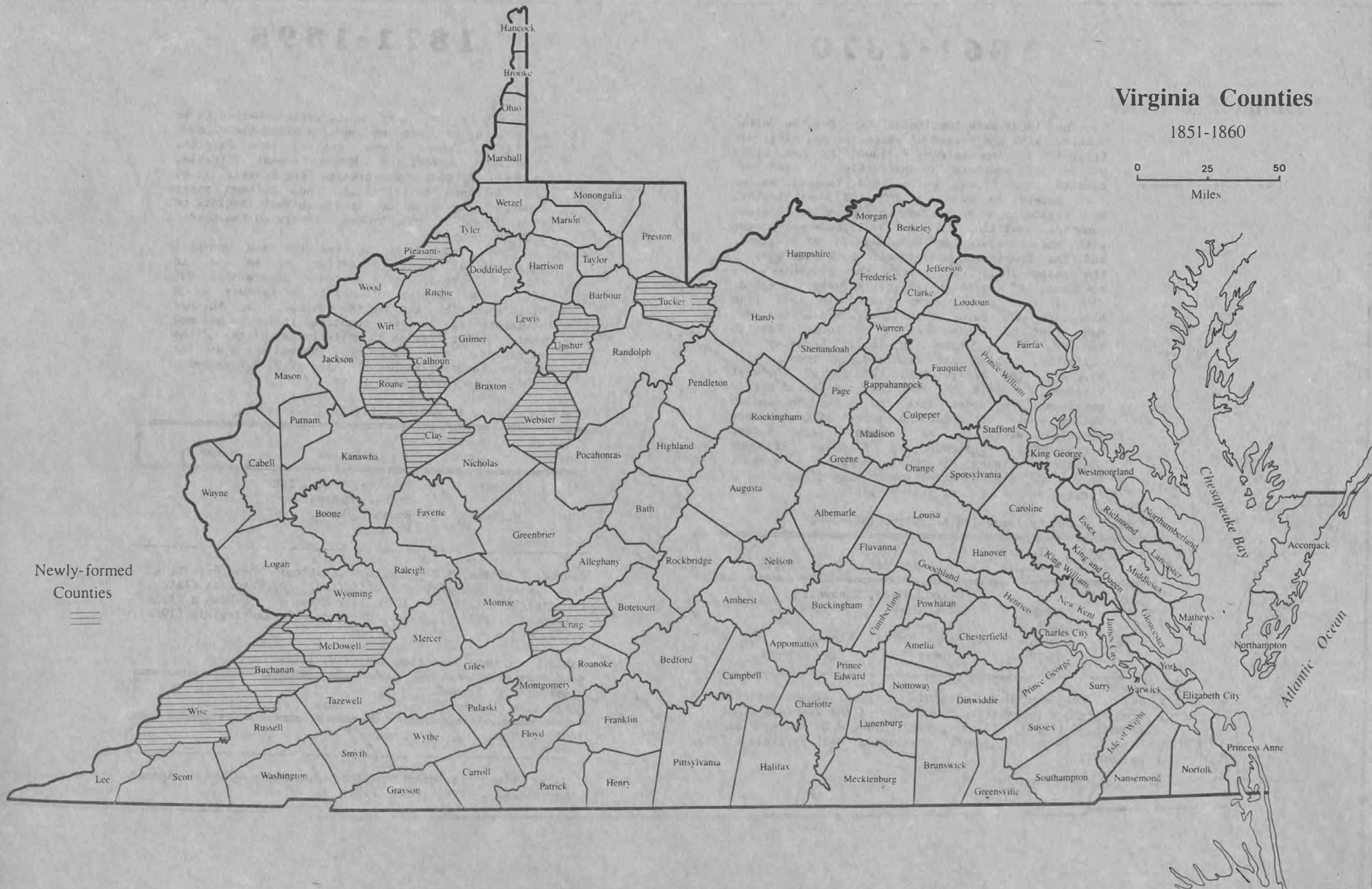
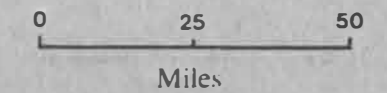
Table 22. County Formation Activity, 1851-1860

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1851	Craig	Botetourt, Roanoke, Giles, Monroe	
--	Upshur	Randolph, Barbour, Lewis	
--	Pleasants	Wood, Tyler, Ritchie	
1856	Wise	Lee, Scott, Russell	
--	Calhoun	Gilmer	
--	Roane	Kanawha, Jackson, Gilmer	
--	Tucker	Randolph	
1858	Buchanan	Tazewell, Russell	
--	McDowell	Tazewell	
--	Clay	Braxton, Nicholas	
1860	Webster	Nicholas, Braxton, Randolph	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 120-121.

Virginia Counties

1851-1860



1861-1870

The 1860s were tumultuous years for the United States, with the period of secession and civil war (1861-1865) immediately followed by the early period of southern Reconstruction. Bland was created from Giles, Wythe, and Tazewell as the last antebellum county. In 1863, West Virginia was created from several dozen Appalachian Plateau counties unwilling to be associated any longer with the secessionist Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Charleston government took over most of the responsibilities whereby the remaining new counties of greater Virginia were created. Mineral and Grant were created in 1866 from Hampshire and Hardy respectively, and Lincoln was made out of lands donated by Boone, Cabell, Kanawha, and Putnam in 1867. Berkeley and Jefferson, which had remained by choice with Virginia in 1863, were transferred to West Virginia in 1866 by fiat of the United States government in order that the lower Shenandoah Valley would be under the control of a state not expected ever to hold sympathy with future secessionist philosophy. Although Richmond objected, nothing effectual could be done about this and the counties have stayed under the first-order control of West Virginia.

Table 23. County Formation Activity, 1861-1870

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1861	Bland	Giles, Wythe, Tazewell	
1866	Mineral	Hampshire	
--	Grant	Hardy	
1867	Lincoln	Boone, Cabell, Kanawha, Putnam	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), p. 121; Sims, E.B. *Making a State. Formation of West Virginia*. Charleston, West Virginia (1956), pp. 90-92.

1871-1895

Only a few very remote areas remained to be subdivided to form new counties after the 1860s. In 1871 Summers was created from Fayette, Greenbrier, Mercer, and Monroe in West Virginia. In 1880, Dickenson was created from Russell, Wise, and Buchanan in Virginia. And fifteen years later, Logan gave up lands in West Virginia to form Mingo in the broken country on the border with Kentucky.

This brought to an end two and one-half centuries of county formation; to an end, it should be said, so far as can be determined. But after the passing of nearly a century since Mingo's birth, and in the absence of any further movements to form new counties, it may be assumed that further fission is unlikely for either of the Virginias. the future may instead see a similar fusive tendency as has been the case, for example, recently in the British Isles.

Table 24. County Formation Activity, 1871-1880

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1871	Summers	Fayette, Greenbrier Mercer, Monroe	
1880	Dickenson	Russell, Wise, Buchanan	

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), p. 121; Sims, E.B. *Making a State. Formation of West Virginia*. Charleston, West Virginia (1956), p. 92.

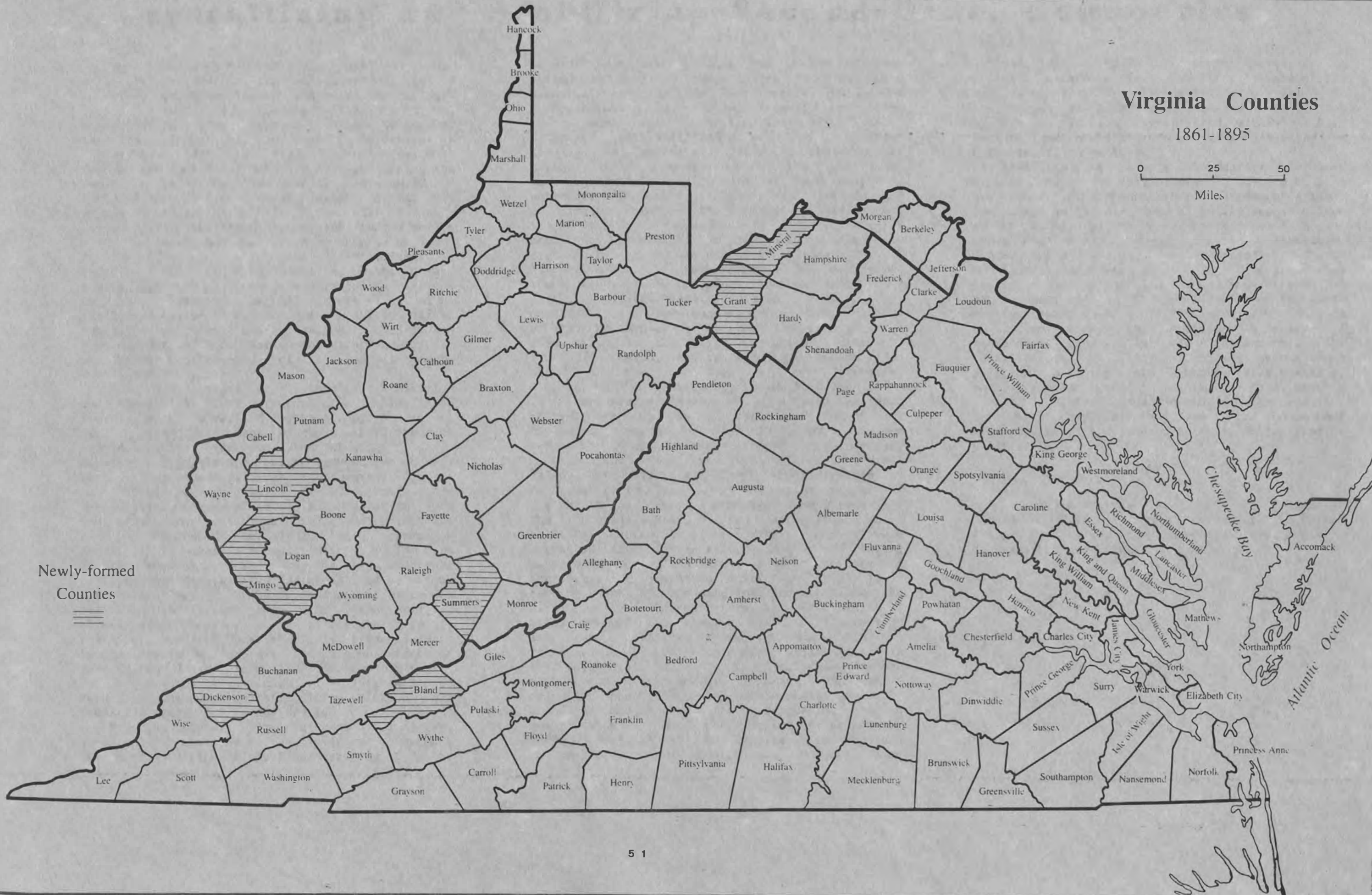
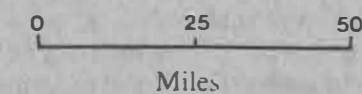
Table 25. County Formation Activity, 1891-1900

Year of Formation	Formed County	Source	Notes
1895	Mingo	Logan	

Source: Sims, E.B. *Making a State. Formation of West Virginia*. Charleston, West Virginia (1956), pp. 92-93.

Virginia Counties

1861-1895



Crystallizing and Stabilizing Second-Order Boundaries

With the expansion of a state into new lands, each area added to the effectively-controlled territory proceeds through phases of increasingly greater density of occupation, efficiency of use, and political consolidation. In the instance of this last aspect, it is possible to present in cartographic terms the expanding state region of regularized political activity through mapping the region where second-order boundaries are no longer fluctuating. At any given instant during the expansion phase of a state, there will be both a region of unstabilized boundaries and a region where boundary adjustments have come to an end. At the time when a boundary crystallizes, or reaches its final position, contemporary populations may well not recognize the fact, since only the passage of time will make certain that no further locational adjustments are likely. After roughly one human generation, a boundary has become part of the habituated experience of the peoples on either side of it, and it may be considered stabilized.

The eight images of Virginia's crystallizing and stabilizing territory presented in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 offer a revised impression of the retreat of the frontier. Maps of the American frontier commonly have been published showing a given density of population (often between two and six persons per square mile) as a surrogate from which the frontier can be inferred. Since only intermittent census materials exist prior to 1790, and since the frontier as a political concept has an undemonstrated correlation with population density, this measure is unsatisfactory. The maps herein showing where Virginia's second-order polities had crystallized and stabilized offers an alternative device which is independent of census records and can show the frontier and effectively-controlled areas of a state in purely political terms. Once similarly prepared maps become available for all the original states of the United States, it will become possible to assemble a political image of early growth patterns in augmentation of Friis' population work completed nearly half a century ago.¹

Pre-revolutionary Virginia's political history was mainly connected to the firming of government and administration of the Tidewater. By 1660, the

original settlements along the James had been joined by foci on the Eastern Shore and north along the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers. The next generation of colonial activity emphasized retrenchment and solidification of political authority, with infilling of second-order polities firming as connectors unifying the Virginia context into a whole. Under the impetus of encouragement by the agents of Lord Culpeper, purchaser of patent rights to the "northern neck of Virginia" between the Potomac and Rappahannock in 1689, and his successor Lord Fairfax, the major thrust of pioneering in Virginia in the early eighteenth century was northwest in this area. By 1740 a number of new counties had been formed there and were becoming resolved into their lasting jurisdictional dimensions. This front amounted to a two hundred mile zone oriented roughly northwest to southeast across the lower Tidewater. In the last generation before the revolution began, county boundaries became fixed throughout the remainder of the Tidewater, supplanting the frontier beyond the fall line.

After Virginia became one of several federated states, the process of firming jurisdictional expansion pressed more strongly westward. By the turn of the nineteenth century crystallizing counties could be found even within the Great Valley of Virginia. There was a period of relative retrenchment over the next thirty years, presumably as settlers who might have pushed into the trans-Allegheny area and consolidated political control there for Virginia instead were attracted into the less rugged blue grass country between Lexington and Nashville or in the Missouri territory, or journeyed into the fertile lands opening west of the Carolinas and Georgia as the Five Civilized Tribes entered the final stages of being removed from their homelands. Between 1830 and 1860, settlers whose antecedents lay in Pennsylvania by way of the Great Valley filled in the valleys and hollows of the Appalachian Plateau with their multitude of offspring, and almost overnight the frontier shrank to nearly nothing. When the War Between the States began, only the most remote regions of the Allegheny Front and the western drainage of the Kanawha River remained unconsolidated with crystallized and stabilized

jurisdictions. Most of these ceased to be frontier within a few years after the end of the war, and by 1890 only one wild area remained on the border of Kentucky and the New State of West Virginia. It too crystallized within a half decade, and stability was recognized there by the early twentieth century.

Stability of county boundaries has been violated since the late nineteenth century only in one sense. The phenomenon of independent cities, operating as a new form of polity separate from county authority, commenced at that point to give urban centers separate operating administrations. Since these units have repeatedly annexed additional segments of county lands, they represent superimposition of a modern type of second-order polity to the exclusion of that used in the pushing back of the frontier. It may be that, in time, the continued expansion of independent city jurisdictions may accomplish the consolidation of all Virginia's second-order political activity into a much smaller number of more efficient units. As things stand, at this moment in history a small number of older counties have been completely engulfed by the independent city movement and ceased to exist as functioning polities.

NOTE

1 Friis, Herman R., 1940: "A Series of Population Maps of the Colonies and the United States. 1625-1790," American Geographical Society, Mimeographed and Offset Publication No. 3.

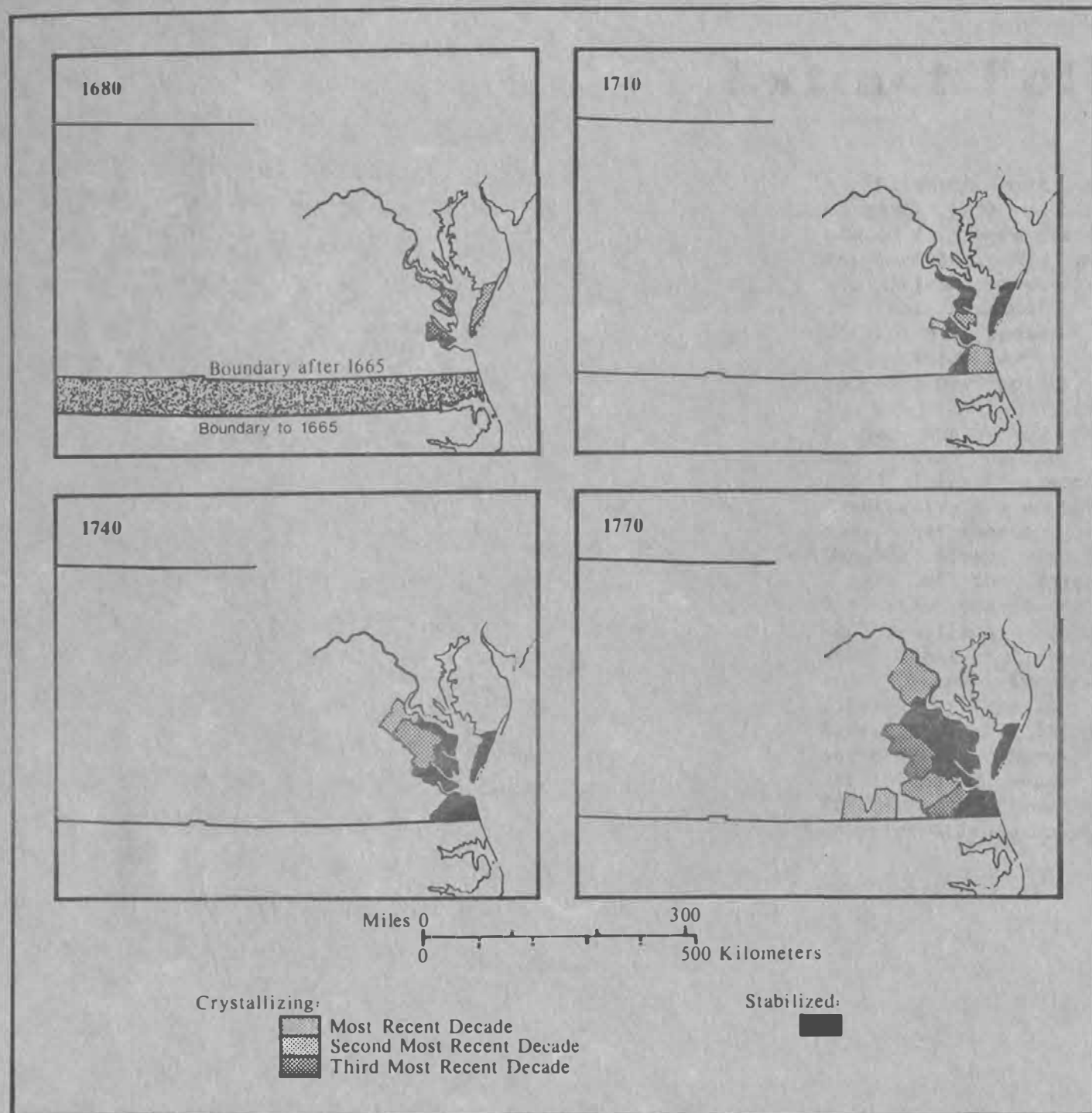


Figure 1.

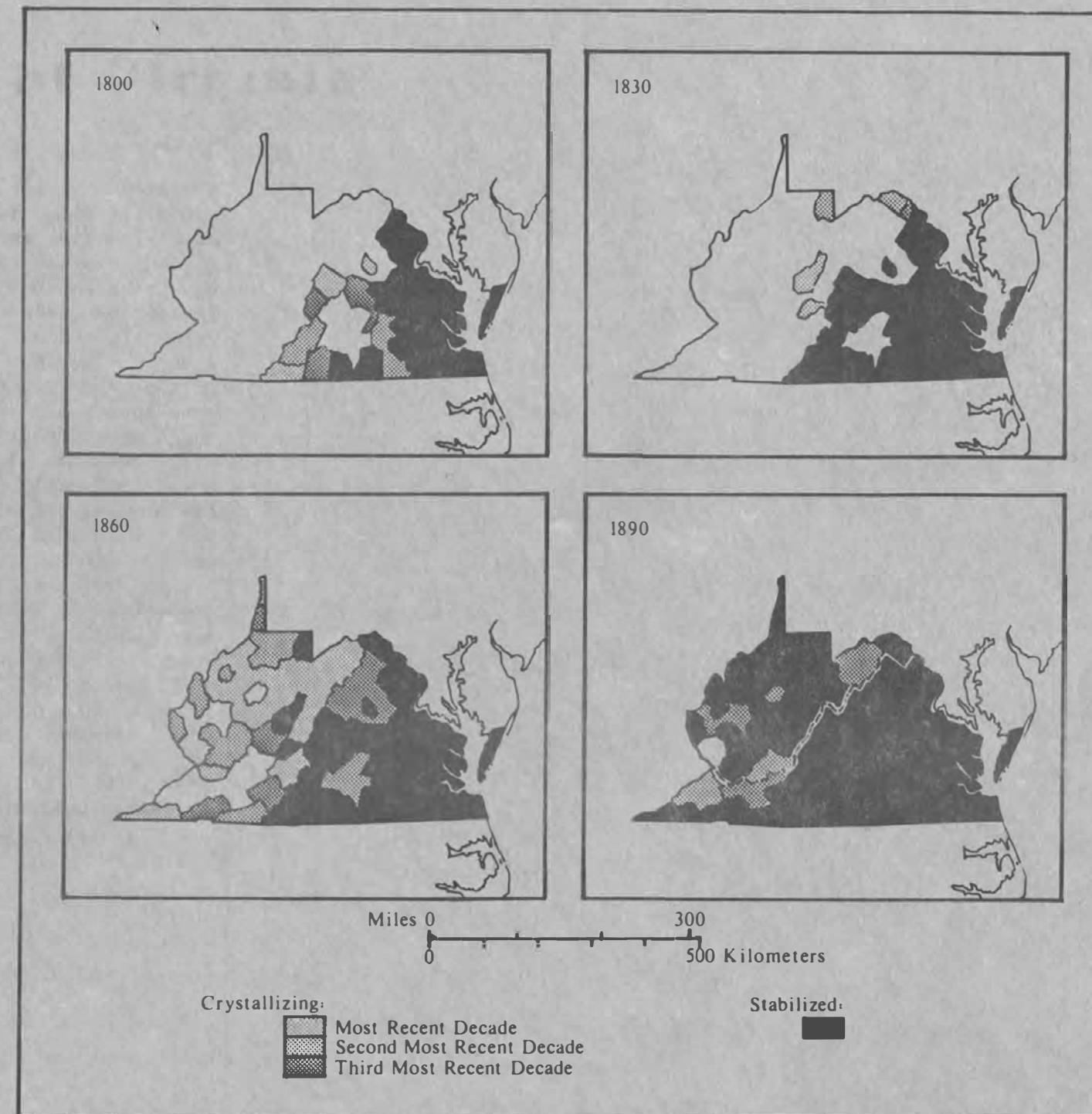


Figure 2.

Extinct Polities of Virginia

Although most second-order polity names in Virginia have maintained uninterrupted existence since they were first created, some were erased in the course of events. The several early vicinities named after important Amerindian groups in local residence -- Warrosquyoake, Accawmack, Chicacoan Indian District (not formally administered as a county, but equivalent as a second-order polity), and Rappahannock -- ceased to use their original names after the tribes were forced out. New Norfolk was divided into Upper and Lower Norfolk because of administrative difficulties associated with distance, and eventually one of these was completely renamed and the other shortened to Norfolk. Charles River and Warwick River were renamed in response to the tumult of the English Civil War, and Dunmore and Fincastle ceased to exist because of the War of the Rebellion. Yohogania, Kentucky, and Illinois were lands of distant and somewhat uncertain title and were eventually lost to alternative first-order polity governments. Nine of the fourteen extinctions occurred during the seventeenth century, the remainder through the revolutionary period ending in the 1780s. No further extinctions have been permitted under the administration of post-revolutionary Virginia.

Table 26. Extinct Polities of Virginia

Period of existence	Name	Notes
1634-1637	Warrosquyoake	One of the original eight shires, encompassing the shores south of the James Estuary where the Amerindian tribe of this name lived; renamed Isle of Wight when most aboriginals were displaced to the southward.
1634-1642/3	Accawmack	One of the original eight shires, encompassing the Eastern Shore area where the Amerindian tribe of this name lived; renamed Northampton when the tribe was displaced to the northward.
1634-1642/3	Charles River	One of the original eight shires and named for the contemporary English sovereign; renamed the more politic appellation of York, Charles's family name, on commencement of the English Civil War.
1634-1642/3	Warwick River	One of the original eight shires and named for the Earl of Warwick; shortened to the colloquial abbreviation of Warwick during the general activity of county renaming begun for Accawmack and Charles River.
1634-1648	Chicacoan Indian District	Amerindian preserve specified north of the Rappahannock River; renamed Northumberland when the tribes were displaced westward by invading pioneers.
1636-1637	New Norfolk	Named for Norfolk County when Elizabeth City's lands south of the James Estuary were made a separate polity; split into lower and upper segments when difficulties of communication with distant settlements were noted.
1637-1642	Upper Norfolk	Created out of the upstream lands of New Norfolk; renamed Nansemond after the largest river in the area.
1637-1691	Lower Norfolk	Created out of the downstream lands of New Norfolk; renamed Norfolk when Princess Anne was formed from its eastern districts in recognition of colloquial abbreviation.
(Continued)		

Table 26 (contd.). Extinct Polities of Virginia

Period of existence	Name	Notes
1656-1692	Rappahannock	Named for the major Amerindian tribe in the area when the upstream districts of Lancaster became a separate polity; eventually split into two polities, one named for the English county of Essex, the other for the English municipal borough of Richmond.
1772-1778	Dunmore	Named for the contemporary governor of Virginia; renamed Shenandoah after commencement of the War of the Rebellion and the imposition of a revolutionary government in Virginia.
1772-1777	Fincastle	Named for the son of Governor Dunmore; split into three new polities after commencement of the War of the Rebellion: Kentucky, for the regional Amerindian name for lands west of the Cumberland Mountains, and Montgomery and Washington, two contemporary revolutionary military officers.
1776-1786	Yohogania	Name applied to lands disputed with Pennsylvania and Maryland which were claimed after commencement of the War of the Rebellion; title abandoned on institution of the post-revolutionary state government of Virginia.
1777-1780	Kentucky	Named for regional Amerindian name for lands to the west of the Cumberland Mountains; split into three new polities when the region began to be partitioned: Fayette, for the French volunteer officer in the War of the Rebellion; Jefferson, for the contemporary revolutionary governor of Virginia; and Lincoln, for a contemporary revolutionary military officer.
1778-1784	Illinois	Name applied to lands disputed with several other revolutionary colonies before and during the War of the Rebellion; title abandoned on institution of the post-revolutionary state government of Virginia.

Source: Robinson, M.P. "Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation," *Bulletin of the Virginia State Library*, 9 (1,2,3) (1916), pp. 8, 90-91, 172-193.

Ogive of Virginia County Formation

One of the most interesting aspects discerned in the pattern of Virginia county formation was the graphed curve of new unit formation (Fig. 3). the rate of county formation in the very earliest days was fairly low, but this changed after several decades. By the nineteenth century the rate of new county formation had become several times greater than at first, as the whole Appalachian Plateau was opened up and occupied by settlers. Then, after the end of the War Between the States, the rate slowed again and at last died entirely away by the end of the nineteenth century.

As a general remark, the pattern of slow-fast growth is one which is quite familiar to students of biology. The curve is an ogive, or S-curve; the biological analogy is one wherein a life system begins, experiences rapid adolescent growth, then stabilizes as maturity is reached. County formation is an attempt of a state to create a subordinate political system that will effectively control its claimed space. Once a given level of satisfaction with the administrative results is obtained through formation of a given saturation of counties, new county formation will slow and finally end. This is the process which was underway in the course of the time period shown in the graph, and in this atlas.

Despite the fact that under modern conditions of transportation the size of Virginia's and West Virginia's counties is archaic, and greater efficiency could be obtained through amalgamation of units, this has not yet been successfully attempted in either case. There appears to be a substantial inertia obtained by second-order polity arrangements which causes them to retain their pattern in space long after the initial conditions which produced them have vanished.

Fig. 3. Virginia County Formation, 1634-1900

